

Disability Now

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20-23 CLASSIFIEDS

Under 5s in benefits row



Triples Rachel, Robert and Steven Jow with father Philip arrive outside Parliament in January.

TIM RUSSELL

The Government has rejected appeals from parents of children with severe disabilities to reform the new Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

From April, Attendance Allowance and Mobility Allowance combine to form the DLA.

But the new benefit includes the same age bar as the old Mobility Allowance, so under 5s will not qualify for its mobility component.

Last month a delegation of parents from the Dearne branch of the Child Poverty Action Group urged Anne Widdecombe, the Parliamentary under Secretary of State for Social Security, to remove the age bar.

Ms Widdecombe sympathised with the parents' problems, but insisted that five was the right age to start assessing children's mobility needs, because children under five were not independently mobile.

Andy Kershaw of Dearne CPAG said: "We are obviously disappointed because unless this rule is changed 25,000 children will miss out on this benefit, but we fight on."

"As the mobility costs for a

family with a disabled child under five are the same as a family with a child over five, it is unfair to make a distinction."

Marilyn Howard of the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR), which supported the lobby, said: "It would only cost the Government £35m to remove the age bar completely."

Michael Meacher, Labour social security spokesman, said his party would lower the age bar to three.

Sally Witcher of Disability Alliance said: "The Government's claims that all under fives have mobility problems is ludicrous. A trained medical examiner would know whether a child's inability to walk arises from natural infancy or severe disability."

"Two years ago the Government removed a similar age bar for children applying for Attendance Allowance, so why maintain this ridiculous age discrimination for a new benefit?"

RADAR/DLF merger in trouble

Merger plans between the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR) and the Disabled Living Foundation (DLF) are hanging by a thread after a shock decision by RADAR's executive committee before Christmas.

Eighteen months of careful preparation ground to a halt when the committee vetoed its chairman's recommendation of Peter Cardy as director of the new organisation.

Mr Cardy, at present director of the Motor Neurone Disease Association, was the unanimous choice of a panel which included RADAR's chairman Dr Adrian Stokes and DLF chairman Tom Jackson. He beat off six other candidates, three of whom were

Continued on page 3

Peto comes here

The Peto Institute, which pioneered conductive education for children with cerebral palsy, is coming to the UK. Children will no longer have to travel to Hungary for assessment. Some will be able to get treatment here as well.

In partnership with The Spastics Society, the Peto Institute is opening its first branch, in London, on 17 February.

The Peto Andras Centre for Conductive Education (UK) will offer assessments and work programmes using two teams of conductors from Hungary headed by a visiting director.

Families from all over the UK and Eire are eligible. They will be able to spend a day at The Spastics Society's Fitzroy Square centre, where the child will be assessed and the parents given advice and help with a work programme.

While some children may be referred to Budapest, others will return to the centre for intensive work, supported by parents at home, lasting from

three weeks to three months. The charge will be £70 a day for the assessment and follow-up programme. Further backup in the form of three-week summer schools are planned. In 1992 there will be two schools which will help 150 children.



Dr Maria Hari and Society chairman Anthony Hewson

ANNA TULLY

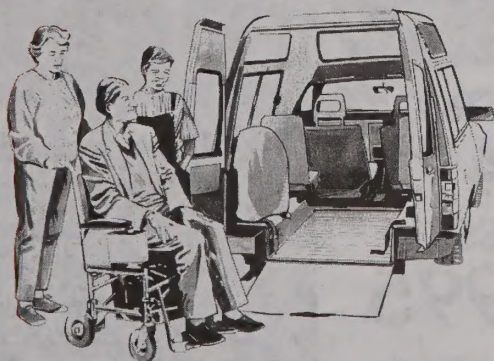
Parents and pre-school children can also join Schools for Parents, to learn the basics of conductive education together. Some already exist, and by April there will be ten. The target is 100 nationwide in six years' time.

To support the new centre

Continued on page 3

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Pat Stothard from Colwyn Bay, has asked PM John Major for help in getting an indoor-outdoor electric wheelchair. Mrs Stothard, a member of Campaign for Handicapped Independence in Propelled Seats, was told by the Artificial Limb and Appliance Centre in Wrexham she couldn't have one because her family was strong enough to push her conventional chair.

TV company signs on

Britain's first independent television production company run by deaf people is to have a starring role in a new tv programme for deaf people.

Sign On from Tyne Tees Television will feature regular items from Deaf Owl Productions when the new 30 week series of half-hour programmes starts on 28 March at 9.30am.

It will also feature major news items with sign language and subtitles, programmes shown previously without subtitles or sign language, programmes made for deaf viewers in other countries (mainly European), a "people's programme" where viewers can have their say, and an arts and entertainment guide.

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Lin Berwick, *DN's* telephone counsellor, herself disabled, can give other disabled people and their carers advice and support on personal and spiritual problems. Talk to her on Monday afternoons, 1pm-5pm and Thursdays 6pm-10pm. Her telephone number is (04024) 77582.

Workshops at war

Clothing workshops which tailor-make garments for disabled people have come out fighting following the Government's refusal to grant them emergency funding.

Their numbers have fallen from 20 in 1988 to nine today following the loss of Community Programme grants (*DN*, December 1991).

After MPs highlighted the crisis in March 1990, the Department of Health asked the independent Social Policy Research Unit to investigate.

Published in November, the SPRU report called workshops "a vital resource for disabled people" and warned: "Financial help is a matter of urgency if [they] are to survive".

The Government says it must look at the "broader context" of providing clothing for disabled people and has no legal framework through which to fund workshops.

But Philip Porter, chairperson of the National Association of Clothing Workshops insists the Government should step in with cash now.

The campaign involves: open days at workshops, to which all local MPs will be invited; Mansfield Labour MP Alan Meale tabling an adjournment debate; the publication of the Association's response to the SPRU report; and the lobbying of MPs at Westminster.

See page 17.

Blackpool's finest

Paula Marie Gould, 21, from Blackpool, has become one of only 33 people out of 900,000 in the UK and Eire to win a Royal Society of Arts medal for "outstanding achievement".

Ms Gould (*right*), who is disabled, won a bronze medal for computer literacy and information technology.

She was nominated by staff at Beneast Training Centre, where she has been studying computing, and has now



started an administrative job at Blackpool town hall.

Customised mobility for the less mobile

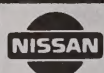
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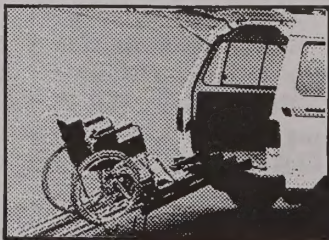
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Benefits on the BBC

The Department of Social Security is breaking new ground in its efforts to encourage take-up of the new Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and the Disability Working Allowance (DWA) by going into partnership with the BBC.

From 21 January for 12 weeks, video owners will be able to record programmes explaining the new benefits. The 15 minute-programmes go out on Tuesday at 2am on BBC1, with repeats at the same time on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. The Friday show will be signed and subtitled.

The DSS paid £200,000 production costs, but the BBC, treating the programmes as public service broadcasting, made no profit.

Chris Davies, *DN's* TV critic, was disappointed that the presenter was not disabled. He also wondered if the estimated 70 per cent of homes with videos was echoed in the disability community.

For a free series information pack, tel: 0800 282845.



HRH The Princess of Wales signs with Mala Maharasineam (right) at the opening of the British Deaf Association's new London offices in January. Ms Maharasineam is one of a group of deaf Asian women who have worked on a women's health video as part of the BDA's London Deaf Video Project, a unique scheme set up in 1985 to translate information into British Sign Language from English using video technology.

FRANK BARRETT

Doubts over reading scheme

The British Dyslexia Association (BDA) says the Government's new "reading recovery programme" will falter unless more teachers are trained in how to help dyslexic children.

The programme, based on a scheme pioneered in New

Zealand, will provide primary school children having difficulty in learning to read and write with one-to-one tuition.

A BDA spokesperson said: "We are glad the Government is talking about the need for an improved reading programme,

but we do not believe the new programme will be the answer to all children's problems. Teachers must adapt their lessons to the needs of each individual and be made more aware of the problems faced by dyslexic children."

Peto comes to UK

Continued from page 1

and these other projects, The Spastics Society is launching a £2.9m Partnership Peto appeal.

Visiting the UK in January to sign the agreement, Peto director Dr Maria Hari said: "We chose Britain because of our long-term connection with The Spastics Society. We have wanted to have a British branch from the start, and now The Spastics Society has made this possible."

"The new branch will complement that of the Peto Institute in Budapest and the Birmingham Institute, which we have worked with closely."

She confirmed the new International Peto Institute in Budapest, to which the Government has given £5m, will open in 1993, not 1994.

But no more national branches are planned, because she believes training is the key to conductive education.

Chairman of The Spastics Society Anthony Hewson is delighted about the partnership: "The new centre will increase the choices available to children and their families and will reduce the pressure on them by providing services which up till now have only been available in Budapest."

Director of Operations Robert Hancock said he expected the London branch to do at least eight assessments and 16 follow-ups a week. Although he expects a lot of interest from families "we think we will cope with the vast majority of children."

For an assessment application form, contact the Cerebral Palsy Helpline tel: 0800 626216. To make a credit card donation, tel: 071 323 3551, or send cheques to Partnership Peto Appeal, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ.

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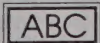
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Merger in trouble

Continued from page 1

disabled, including RADAR's director, Bert Massie.

On 2 January, RADAR's executive committee sent a statement to 500 member groups saying "the timetable to achieve formal merger was too ambitious" and "the consultation and planning period should be extended with a view to a merger still taking place in 1992."

A sub-committee, headed by committee member Sir Peter Baldwin, was appointed to look at merger plans, including the proposed April move to the DLF building in West London, provided the two organisations could remain separate.

Job appointments were put off to "a later date". RADAR members, who have yet to vote on the issue, were to be consulted at three meetings at the end of January.

While there was some relief among RADAR staff that the move might not happen, staff and management at the DLF were shocked and dismayed.

DLF director Paul Brearley was "very disappointed. "Both governing bodies agreed in principle to merge nine months ago. We've hardly been rushing into it."

The DLF plans centred on 1 April. "Where the delay affects us most is fundraising. We've marked time in relation to that. We would be launching new fundraising for the new organi-

sation." The DLF has a running deficit of £150,000.

Though still committed to a merger, the DLF is now saying it must be within "a reasonable time scale". A January meeting of the joint steering group was postponed pending more talks between the chairmen.

Some say RADAR's sudden decision was prompted by pique because the new director would not be Bert Massie.

Others, including Paul Brearley, do not think the issue was disability: rather, the executive committee needed to be more involved with planning than they had been.

Mr Cardy has not withdrawn his application. Dr Stokes, who resigned and then returned, did not return *DN's* calls.

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IN PARLIAMENT

Government concessions on Education Bill

Government amendments to the Further and Higher Education Bill now at report stage in the House of Lords, have been welcomed by a national consortium of disability organisations which is lobbying for students with disabilities.

The amendments are all to do with the responsibilities of the new further education and higher education funding councils, who will take over funding control from local authorities.

The Government will require the councils to provide for students with learning difficulties up to age 25. Previously it was 19.

A new condition of the Government's grant to the funding councils will be that they must seek specialist advice about the needs of students with learning difficulties if no member has that knowledge. The same would apply for quality assessment committees.

This does not go as far as consortium members like Skill (National Bureau for Students with Disabilities) or the RNIB would like: they want councils to definitely include a special needs expert.

But the Government thinks this is covered in the Bill because the Education Secretary is required "to have regard to the desirability of appointing members of the councils from a range of backgrounds, includ-

ing, of course, people with a background in education".

The point was made by Lord Cavendish of Furness, Education Department spokesman in the Lords, replying to various amendments put forward by Baroness Darcy de Knayth (Ind) on 14 January.

To meet all-party concerns raised at the Bill's committee stage, the Government is planning to "issue guidance" (less



Baroness Darcy de Knayth

strong than "requirement") on several matters.

While full-time students with disabilities up to age 25 will get free transport within the Bill, the Government will issue guidance to local education authorities to ensure they provide it too. Part-time stu-

dents are not included so far.

Peers had feared that when funding councils were told to avoid providing education involving "disproportionate expenditure", they might interpret that to include expensive equipment or support needed by disabled students.

Government minister Lord Belstead said the Education Secretary would spell out the position to councils. "There need be no fear that such guidance would be ineffective or would not be attended to."

The Government also plans to issue guidance to funding councils and local education authorities to make sure "assessment is given proper priority in further education," said Lord Cavendish.

Baroness David (Lab) had wanted it to be a requirement. "Nothing is argued except that the process used in schools should simply be extended," she explained.

But Lord Cavendish thought assessment was already implicit in the Bill. He assured peers that "this is not a guidance that they will ignore".

Baroness David was disappointed. She noted that the Association of Principals of Sixth Form Colleges thought the special needs provision

House point

* An injustice to people with learning difficulties was righted at the beginning of the year when the new Criminal Procedure (Insanity and Unfitness to Plead Act) became law. Previously, if someone was unfit to plead they could not be sent for trial; they were automatically committed to hospital indefinitely, whether they had committed the offence or not. The same thing happened if they were found not guilty by reason of insanity. Now the court must determine if the accused did commit the crime. If they did, or a defence of not guilty by reason of insanity is accepted, the Court has five options open to it, from detention in a psychiatric hospital down to an absolute discharge.

seemed inadequate and wanted funding "based upon a clear process of diagnosis and assessment of real need".

An amendment to secure funding for support services in further education colleges was withdrawn after Lord Belstead said it was covered in the Bill.

Some amendments put forward were turned down. For example, Baroness Darcy's attempt to make further education funding councils responsible for providing free courses in daily living or communication, eg braille, was opposed by Lord Cavendish. It made better sense administratively and educationally for LEAs to keep the responsibility, he said. But he left the door open for a possible change in the future.

The debate was adjourned.
Mary Wilkinson

IN BRIEF

More money

Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs), which help elderly and disabled people repair and adapt their homes, will receive a 28 per cent increase in their budgets on 1 April.

Environment Minister Tim Yeo announced last month that the HIAs allocation for 1992/3 would rise from £3.04 million to £3.9 million.

Janie Casey, director of Care and Repair, the national coordinating body for HIAs, said: "We are delighted with the increase. It means an additional 18 agencies will be funded".

Employment action

Action for Blind People is launching two new projects aimed at getting blind and partially sighted people into jobs.

The six month "Employment Action" scheme will give 15-20 people work experience in office work, such as accounting or public relations. It pays £10 a week on top of social security benefits.

The other scheme comprises two 16-week "pre-work training" courses for 15-20 people in London, where you learn job-hunting skills and acquire work experience. People on this course get benefits only.

At the end of both schemes, Action for Blind People will help candidates find a job.

For places, contact Rachel Tripp quickly, tel: 071-732 8771.

Telethon action

The disability movement in London is set to benefit from ITV Telethon money.

Using a £30,000 grant from Telethon, the Greater London Association of Disabled People (GLAD) is launching a training programme aimed at giving disabled people the skills and confidence to play a full role in management committees of voluntary organisations.

Courses will cover topics like committee procedures, fund-raising, equal opportunities.

GLAD will also run a consultancy brokering service, matching organisations with specialists, courses on contracting to provide community care services, and in-house disability equality training.

For a brochure, send an SAE to Training Project, GLAD, 336 Brixton Rd, London SW9 7AA.

Correction

The Rainbow Rehab telephone number (DN, Jan) should have read (0202) 481818.

Gardeners' question time

Where are all those green fingers itching to tell other readers about their prize petunias and nifty short-cuts? Write to the Editor soon, address page 3.

MORE NEW ITEMS



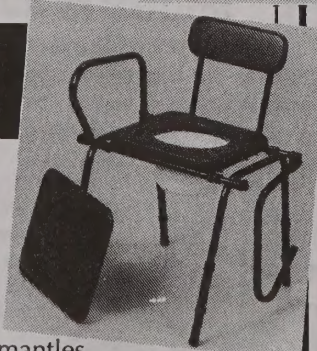
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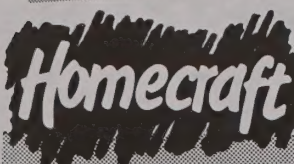
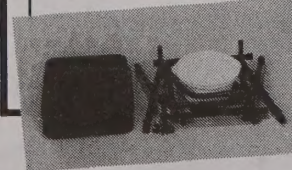


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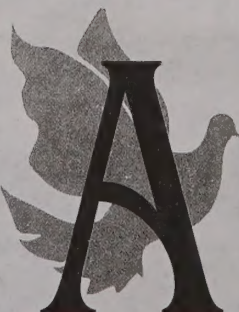
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Good cells v bad cells

Doctors are testing a new treatment for multiple sclerosis (MS).

In people who have MS, white cells in the immune system "turn against" nerve cells to produce symptoms such as speech problems, unsteady gait and weakness in limbs.

Researchers from the Oregon VA Medical Centre in America hope the new treatment will turn off the part of the immune system that causes MS and leave the rest of the defence system intact.



PATRICK BAGLEE

Patients are injected with a vaccine which enables the body to identify the "bad" white cells, called T-cells which damage the myelin sheaths that protect nerves.

The injection then causes the body to manufacture more "good" T-cells and antibodies to attack the "bad" cells.

Oregon Health Science University has been testing the vaccine on 11 patients since last February.

Researcher Dr Halina Offner

commented: "Although it is too soon to evaluate the treatment for such a long-term condition, the initial results are promising.

"But it must be stressed that this is not a miracle cure," she added.

Signing on the screen

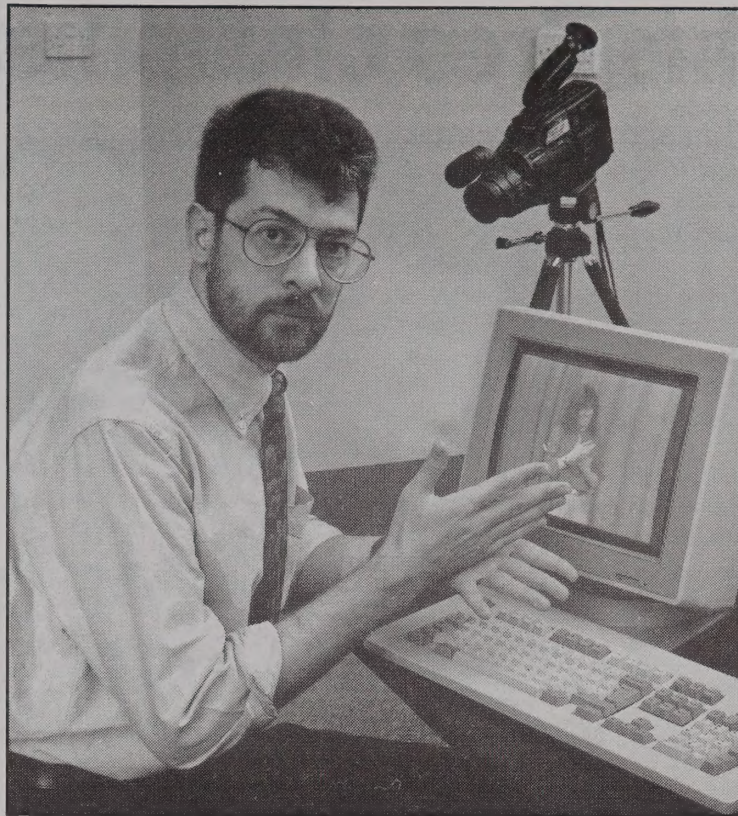
More people will get the chance to learn British Sign Language following the launch of a new video-computer system this month.

The British Sign Language Tutor, designed by Attica Cybernetics, lets people practise without the constant supervision of tutors, who are in short supply.

With the system, which will cost around £5,000, students are played a series of tutorials on video which have been devised by the Bristol University Centre for Deaf Studies.

Each tutorial covers words and phrases students will have learnt in class. Once each lesson is completed, the student films themselves practising the signs with a video camera.

By splitting the screen and replaying the film of the student signing alongside a video of their tutor, the system makes it easy for people to spot their mistakes. It also lets students study particular aspects of a tutorial by zooming in on



Attica Cybernetics' Mike Lloyd "talks back" to the screen.

the hands or face.

Peter Furrer of Attica Cybernetics, which developed the system with the Employment Department, said: "This system's great advantage is that it enables students to work unaided at their own pace. This is a real breakthrough because it means teachers, who are in very short supply, will be able to spend more time with other students".

Tel: (0865) 791346.

Lung cancer vitamin link

European scientists believe vitamin A and the drug N-acetylcysteine (NAC) may help prevent lung cancer.

They believe Vitamin A helps cells that have been affected by carcinogenic chemicals, and have stopped growing normally, to continue their development.

NAC mops up chemicals in the nuclei of cells which damage DNA, and stops them from causing changes that lead to cancer.

If researchers can prove the condition can be prevented in this way, the result could be a daily pill that would cut the risk of lung cancer in heavy smokers.



Scientists from Britain, France, Belgium, Holland, Italy, and Spain are studying 2,000 patients who have had smoking related cancers of the head and neck and been cured by surgery.

This group has the highest risk of developing a second tumour unrelated to the first. Of every 100 patients, ten to 15 men will develop a second tumour within four years.

Professor Gordon McKie, director of the Cancer Research Campaign, which is funding the British research, said he hoped the study would halve the rate of second tumours in this group.

"If it did, this would be a breakthrough of immense importance," he said.

The first results of the study are expected next year.

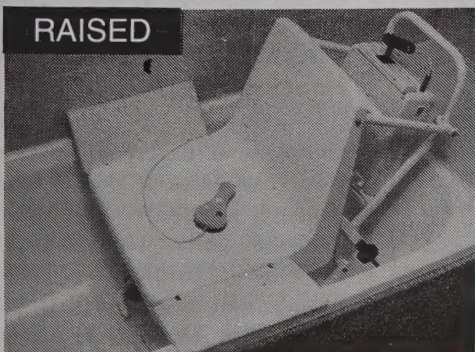
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Snowdon inspires cheap hearing aid

Lord Snowdon's determination to provide partially deaf people with a cheaper aid has led to the development of a new infra-red hearing device.

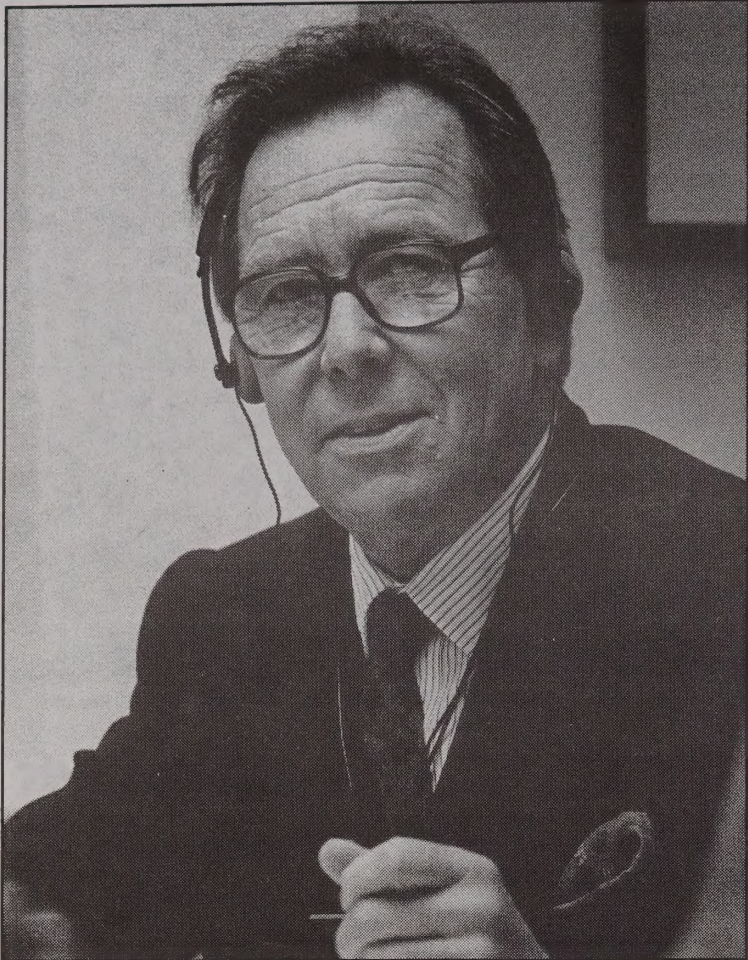
The peer has been the driving force behind the Link TL, which helps partially deaf people hear in noisy places, like offices, pubs, and schools by improving the clarity of the speaker's voice and reducing background noise.

It uses infra-red rays to send signals from a small battery-powered transmitter (worn by the speaker) to a receiver (worn by the hard of hearing person), which is connected to a hearing aid or headphones.

It is not the first infra-red hearing device on the market, but at £300 it is the cheapest.

"A lot of devices on the market are far too expensive and many manufacturers make unrealistic claims about them," said Lord Snowdon. "In contrast, the Link is both cheap and very effective."

The Link is less than half the price of similar German infra-red devices and £300-



Lord Snowdon: "A lot of devices are too expensive".

£400 cheaper than rival hearing aids.

Lord Snowdon first thought of it after watching deaf children use a radio-microphone system to help them hear in class.

"The device is not discreet, it does make it obvious that someone is hard of hearing, but it enables you to hear clearly in crowded places where partially deaf people traditionally have the greatest problems."

Connevans managing director David Evans said: "The Link is the first infra-red device that has a social, rather than educational, use. Lord Snowdon provided the motivation and we have done the development."

A spokesman for The Royal Institute for the Deaf said: "We are delighted with the Link system and welcome the interest shown by Lord Snowdon and his determination to make the device cheaper than its rivals."

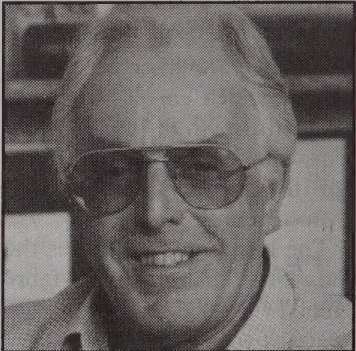
Connevans Ltd, tel: (0737) 243134.

Now it's Lord Brian

Brian Rix, chairman of the Royal Society for Mentally Handicapped Children and Adults (MENCAP), became a baron in the New Year's honours list. The former actor, who was knighted for his charity work in 1986, will become Lord Rix of Whitehall.

"I'm delighted at the opportunity of going into the House of Lords. It will give me much more opportunity to lobby on behalf of mentally handicapped people," he said.

Ivor Cohen, chairman of Remploy, and MP John Hannam, secretary of the All Party Disablement Group, became Knights Bachelor.



Lord Rix of Whitehall

OBEs went to John Edwards, chairman of the Welsh Council for the Disabled, and Mohamed Amin, the tv cameraman who lost an arm in an accident last June (see *Profile*, page 16).

A CBE was awarded to Klaus Wedell, Professor of Educational Psychology, Children with Special Educational Needs, at the University of London.

Mrs Elizabeth Standon,

New education magazine

The Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) has launched a new magazine for parents and professionals on the education of visually impaired children who have additional learning difficulties.

Eye Contact comes out every term. Features in the first issue cover music therapy, respite care and communication.

The RNIB estimates there are over 6,000 visually impaired children in the UK who have multiple special needs.

For a free copy contact Jane Pickerden, RNIB Education and Leisure Division, 224 Great Portland Street, London WIN 6AA, tel: 071-388 1266 ext 2297.

Abortion anniversary

The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) launched its Heartbeat Campaign last month to mark the 25th anniversary of the passing of the Abortion Act.

SPUC claims there are over 40 million abortions in the world each year.

UK-wide events began with a Service of Light and Hope in

Glasgow in January.

A spokesperson for WinVisible, an organisation of women with disabilities, said: "While we oppose the imposition of any policies or laws for the extermination of people with disabilities before or after birth, we believe every woman has the right to choose in every case".

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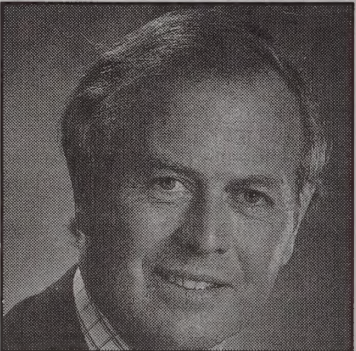
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DN 292



Hannam: Knight Bachelor

employment officer for people with disabilities at Bristol City Council, was awarded an MBE.

David Jones, vice-president of the Disabled Drivers' Association, won an MBE. So did Robert Denney, chairman of Kettering Age Concern.

Other MBEs included Marion Welchman for services to the British Dyslexia Association; Mrs Angela Hendra and Hubert Sturges for services to sport for disabled people, Mrs Mary Wheeler, president of the MENCAP's Mid-Sussex branch; Halford Bonham for services to blind people; Irene Park for services to disabled and elderly people in Moffat.

Italian disabled drivers are fighting back

In Italy it is difficult to get a driving licence if you are disabled and one company monopolises the adaptations market. But that didn't stop disabled drivers making their feelings heard at an historic mobility seminar. David Griffiths reports

When Raffaello Belli, the indefatigable campaigner for disability rights in Italy, announced casually that there was hope Italy would have a seminar and exhibition on driving and disabilities, we guessed immediately that come what may he would deliver the goods. The meeting at the end of November turned out to be a major turning point for disabled drivers in Italy.

Italy is scantily sprinkled with disability concessions. The only motorway services with facilities for wheelchair users seem to be Esso, BP and Shell. Ramped kerbs do occur from time to time in the form of 3-5in drops where 8-14in is the norm. I have never seen a pedestrian crossing so graded; generally they are installed in total isolation, leaving you sitting in the cavernous gutter on the opposite side.

There is one adapted campsite on the Adriatic Coast near Ravenna with two excellent showers and toilets and mosquitos who show no discrimination against those with disabilities, but I have yet to find an Italian who is aware of it.

So we viewed our visit with some trepidation. Would anyone be there, bearing in mind the extreme difficulties involved in travelling with any form of handicap? Could suppliers and manufacturers be counted upon for support? And what of the seminar location? What about accommodation?

The Fortessa di Sasso in Florence is as modern and accessible as any exhibition centre. Level approaches, ample parking, ramps to the upper floors and even an adapted toilet (rumoured to be the only one in Florence). The eve of the show saw diligent workers installing a splendid ramp to what had been a totally

inaccessible restaurant. A regiment of portable loos stood guard in the courtyard. The scene was set for what transpired to be one of the most moving and rewarding of experiences.

Naturally the exhibitors were largely Italian with a predominance of Fiats and Autobianchis. Guidosimplex, which has

of mobility was a powerchair which her husband had managed to make for her with wooden supports to hold her in a semi-standing position; a young man from Brindisi with muscular dystrophy and another from Naples; helpers (so necessary in such a country) and a sprinkling of genuinely involved professionals.

many stands crammed with visitors.

After my own stint on the platform I toured the exhibition, trying to make contact with other disabled people. You did not need to look far.

The ratio of visitors and stand personnel with disabilities appeared much higher than at similar events in our country

him to drive so that he could live a life of his own?

A quiet man approached clutching a video. Would I look at it? Could I help make it possible for his child to drive?

With Brian Page, who deserves great credit for driving a Clio replete with adaptations 1,400 miles through the fog to join me on an adjacent stand, we suggested a few simple adaptations and automatic transmission for this young man of 17 with severe athetoid cerebral palsy.

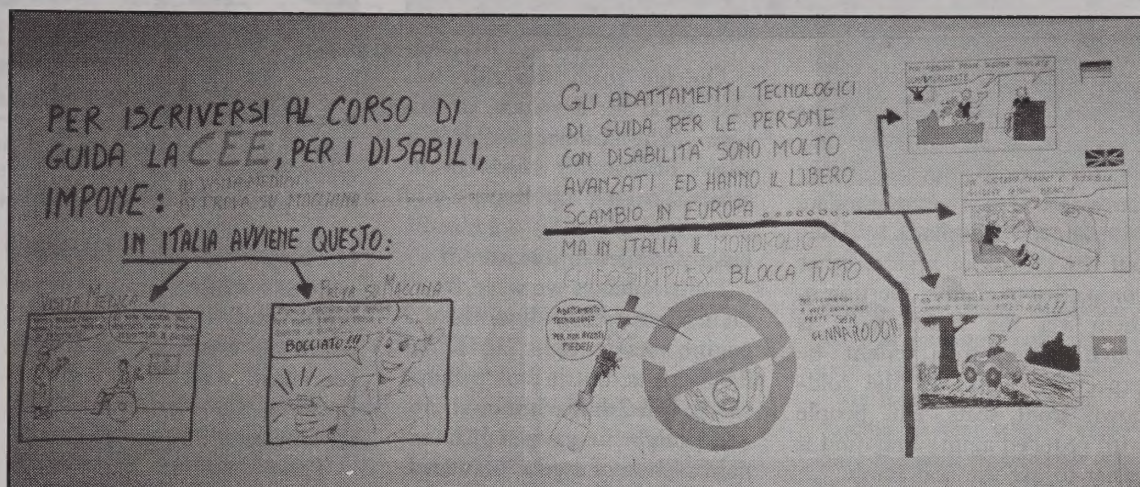
Later I talked to his doctor about the implications of driving and the likelihood of his being able to drive. The doctor asked me to file a report on returning home.

Our "mother-in-law" would be able to drive too. Why had he not already done so? Because he had been quoted the equivalent of £6,000 for the adaptations he needed. Brian Page and I estimated we would be overcharging him at £1,000.

I met many people who either could not afford the cost or would not pay on principle. A driving instructor boasted that he took his car to Germany to have it adapted. Such is the effect of a monopoly.

Sadly, the Italian Ministry of Transport seemed unmoved by the seminar.

But Raffaello Belli doesn't give up. Now he plans to launch a national committee representing all disabled drivers' organisations to put pressure on his Government.



Protestors against the car adaptations monopoly of Guidosimplex put up posters at the exhibition. They also wanted Italian disabled people to have independent medical and driving assessments, in line with the rest of Europe. DAVID GRIFFITHS

a monopoly of disabled driver adaptations, had by far the largest stand replete with eye-catching sports cars.

A group of disabled people clamoured for an end to the monopoly, which has brought inflated prices and restricted choice to so many for so long. Their poster-decked stand highlighted the poor position of disabled drivers in Italy compared with their European Community neighbours.

The exhibition was glossy, attractive and packed with things to see, try and talk about.

In fact nearly 2,000 people came along, from every corner of the land. There was a lady with brittle bones from Trento in what resembled a pram unit mounted on a powerchair chassis; a woman whose only form

They were addressed by some of the best that Europe can offer: Ann Frye, head of our Transport Department's disability unit, setting the initiative for an open market, freedom of choice and greater material support; Jan Brekkelmans from Holland on advanced vehicle conversions; Dr Dolfuss, an orthopaedic surgeon and wheelchair user from France, Dr John Taylor, head of the medical advisory branch of our Transport Department, on the rights of disabled people to have driving licences.

There were speakers from Sweden, Denmark and Germany together with the most influential and important people in the field from Italy.

The second day the attendance was even greater with

and disabled people, having so much more to fight for, were more vociferous, more ready and willing to do something, less suppliant than our young people often are.

I was struck too by the comradeship, the humanity and simplicity. A group of young disabled drivers brought along their friend who, they claimed, was like a mother-in-law to them - always in the back seat! Could we make it possible for

Dutch suggest Council of Disabled People

Philip Mason reports

European laws have disability implications whether they concern transport, trade, education, entertainment, building, communications, so the argument for a legislative review body representing the interests of disabled people is convincing. The question is: how does one bring about such a body?

This was the business of a meeting of "disability interests" called by the Dutch Council of Disabled People and sponsored by the Dutch Government at the Hague in December.

Two views emerged about setting up a European Community Council of Disabled People. One was eager to establish a body; the other was more cautious, asking questions

about who will serve on it, how they will be selected, what their responsibilities will be and who will meet the costs.

Some representatives thought the proposed body must be composed only of disabled people, chosen by and answerable to them, while others regarded parents, disability consultants, orthodox charities, organisations for disabled people, etc, to be a legitimate part of the "voice of disabled people".

Representatives were encouraged to report back to their organisations and invite comments. A steering group is to try and reconcile the different opinions and possibly draw up draft principles, a constitution and a plan of action.

My own view is that before any further cooperation is undertaken, we should consider the potential problems of having a mixed association. Disabled Peoples' International already exists and for those concerned about the "purity" of the voice this may be a more acceptable means of organising at European Community level than a new council.

There is no doubt that the voice of disabled people needs to be heard. To have credibility, it must speak from the daily experience of living with a disability.

Philip Mason, tel: (0420) 474261, was a representative from the British Council of Organisations of Disabled People.

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DN2/92

DN's David Griffiths was the first motoring correspondent to ride in the new Fiesta Courier conversion from Gowrings Mobility

Fiestas have a good reputation. They are generally reliable, economical and comfortable. Fiesta owners tend to return again and again, a fact which speaks for itself.

Ford's new Fiesta Courier van offers a wide-bodied, extended roofline package in the French Renault/Citroen style. Not particularly attractive from the rear, perhaps, but a very practical way of ensuring maximum carrying potential from a smaller vehicle.

With much of the initial package already offering access potential for wheelchairs, it is only natural that Gowrings should incorporate it into their Chairman range.

Plenty of space

Externally, the Courier Chairman is one of the smaller wheelchair carriers, but inside it is a different story.

With four adults aboard, plus me with a power chair, there was still plenty of breathing space. Surprisingly, headroom at 54in is an inch more

A winner except for the windows



than the Escort.

Two forward-facing rear passenger seats offer a fair degree of comfort despite being narrowed to accommodate wheelchair footplates. They put the efforts of several other companies to shame. Getting to them via the front doors is much easier than might be expected, thanks to the fold-down front seats. But people with reduced agility may find it easier to use the rear ramp.

Strong and non-slip-coated, the ramp gives rear access for the wheelchair user. Its gradient is limited by a continued incline from the lowered floorpan of the vehicle.

Powered inertia belts provide anchorage and stability when loading and unloading.

On the road, the ride was very good for a vehicle of this type. The Courier took the worst of country roads in its stride, soaking up bumps and dents and allowing only really large potholes to jolt us.

Fully laden as we were, overtaking was rather slow, the 1.3 engine being tight at under 2,000 miles, but it took a short, sharp 1 in 7 hill without strain.

As might be expected, internal finish is of a good standard, although somewhat plain and uninspiring with an all-grey trim and white paintwork.

Safety good, vision poor

In general, I felt very comfortable and extremely safe.

But I was less than happy with the all-round vision.



The Ford Courier van (left and above) has joined the Chairman range. Five adults, one in an electric wheelchair, still had "plenty of breathing space" but vision needs improving.

There were large, fixed side windows which, because of the basic body design, stopped below my eye level. All I could see ahead was about two sections of the white centre line disappearing into the fog.

Those shorter than I am (although I am pretty short) may find they have a good view of their surrounding, but I was far from happy at not being able to see adequately other than in a rearwards direction.

Prospective buyers would do well to opt for sliding side windows rather than fixed ones to

prevent the "greenhouse" effect setting in on summer days.

A diesel engine is available. But as you can expect to get 45-55 mpg, maybe more, from the petrol version, paying extra for diesel may be unnecessary.

With some additional glass the new Courier could be a winner. It looks good on the road, is quiet, refined and economical, and the price slots nicely into the medium range at £10,700.

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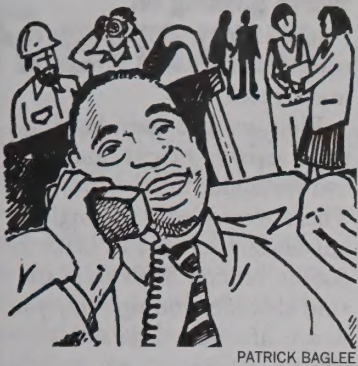
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DN2/92



SCOOP! Journalist at work

Careers (2): Richard Bowen, a journalist who has a disability, gives the inside story

wonder what I had to do - short of giving birth - to get into journalism.

I wrote to a dozen newspapers in Manchester, as well as a couple of magazines. Out of four replies, only one - the *Stockport Messenger* - offered me a job.

The journalism course at Sheffield's Stradbroke College consists of three academic subjects - local government, central government and law. Trainees also attend journalism classes where most of the time is spent learning how to write and construct news stories.

You also learn how to write to length and meet tight

newspaper on computer, was much more enjoyable.

I wasn't the first disabled student to study at Stradbroke - the department had people with epilepsy and heart conditions long before the RADAR scheme was even thought of - but I was the first "obviously" disabled one.

Although my cerebral palsy does not affect my walking, I noted that Stradbroke has made access one of its priorities. It has a number of wheelchair ramps, lifts and disabled loos and a generous number of disabled parking spaces together with a general willingness among staff and students to help disabled people as much as possible.

At the start of the course, I was afraid the lecturers would treat me with "kid gloves" because I was disabled. My anxiety was misplaced. If I wrote a poorly constructed news story, I was told it was unacceptable. If I put in a good piece, it was praised. And if the class was given a project to do, I had to hand it in at the same time. Disabled people who are offered a place on the NCTJ course will get a rude awakening if they expect to be treated as a special case.

What do you need to be a good journalist? You have to be able to write pieces that are clear and concise, spot good stories, and write them so that people want to read beyond the first paragraph. All these skills are developed on the NCTJ course.

A good journalist also needs to be able to get on with and get the best out of all sorts of people. Some people might think a journalist who has cp would have problems communicating. When I asked one of the lecturers, who speaks through a voice box, if he felt his speech had held him back he replied "Only as far as broadcasting goes." I didn't have any problems with Sheffielders, the majority of whom were very friendly and not at all patronising.

Because RADAR only funds three places on the NCTJ course, competition is fierce. You may stand a better chance if you can demonstrate a commitment to journalism, for



Getting the story: Richard Bowen (left) interviews Billy Butt of the Packet House football team during a game. JOHN KING

example, by doing freelance work or getting work experience on a local paper.

As for the future, I am waiting to hear when I can start the staff newspaper job on the *Stockport Messenger*. I have passed five of my six course exams (law 1&2, administration 1&2, and newspaper journalism 1) and am waiting for the result the last one (newspaper journalism 2) with bated breath.

I see myself as a journalist who happens to have a disability rather than as a "disabled journalist". One reason why I find journalism so satisfying is that my cp doesn't matter. What counts is the fact I can write. If you are disabled and can turn in good pieces, it doesn't matter if you have to type them with your

big toe.

I strongly disagree with Chris Davies (*DN*, January), that newspapers should have a disabled desk, in the same way they do a foreign or a sports desk. If this was the case, disabled journos would invariably staff these desks, placing us back in the ghetto.

The ideal would be to raise awareness among able-bodied reporters so they can cover disability issues sensitively, asking advice from disabled colleagues if necessary. But before that happens, many more newspapers must open their doors to disabled trainees.

Closing date for the 1992-93 RADAR scheme is 28 February. Contact Caroline Gooding, 071-637 5400 ext 322.

CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME: Richard Bowen

JOB: Journalist

QUALIFICATIONS: 5 O Levels, 7 CSEs, 3 A levels, degree in English literature. Wrote freelance and worked on newsletter for alcohol abuse agency as part of Community Programme scheme.

SKILLS: Ability to write and get on with people.

newspaper journalism run by the National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ). It will also cover your living expenses if you can't get a grant from the local council, and pay for any equipment you might need.

I saw the course as my only remaining hope of getting into the newspaper industry. I had had enough rejection letters to paper a large wall and had sent cuttings to editors all over the country. But I was still jobless.

The NCTJ entrance exams included writing a news story from a hotch potch of information and a fairly easy general knowledge test.

I was offered a place on one condition - unlike any other applicant, I had to secure a newspaper job to go to after the course ended in December 1991. The NCTJ wanted me to do this because it would prove to them that somebody in the business believed I would be able to cope with the rigours of newsroom life.

I was peeved about this to say the least. After all, I had just spent three years trying to get a staff job. I began to

deadlines. Typing up a news story in 40 minutes used to really take it out of me, but in general I managed it, which was rather satisfying.

Trainees also had to learn shorthand. My cerebral palsy prevents me writing in longhand - I use a tape recorder - so I was exempt from these classes (rendering me the object of much good-humoured envy from classmates).

We had to complete two main projects. (This was part of the "Mundela scheme", unique to Stradbroke, which allows trainees going on to Sheffield University to miss out the first year of the journalism degree course and gives them the beginnings of a journalism portfolio.)

The first assignment was covering a parish council as if you were a reporter on a local paper. If you get a lively council, this can be very enjoyable. I wasn't so lucky: with the sleepy village of Eckington I had to really fish for news. The second assignment, gathering news and putting together a mini-

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Letters to the Editor

Disability Now, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ

Watch the access to cash

As an ex-voluntary worker in the access field, now an access officer employed full-time by a London borough and hon sec of the London Region of the Access Officers Association, I read Anne Royston's article ("Converting knowledge into cash" *DN*, January) with great interest.

But I write in haste to warn my fellow disabled about the pitfalls of "going it alone", even for cash!

Planning is a statutory requirement for developers and architects to consider the effects of their plans on the whole community, including people with disabilities. Their proposals receive professional scrutiny from development planning control officers who advise acceptance or refusal in accordance with the local Unitary Development Plan (which sets out how the local authority wants its land used and the standards to be implemented).

Access officers like myself who are employed by local authorities have the time and resources to ensure that the existing statutory obligations of making public buildings accessible are applied, and to pursue plans from application to completed project - which can take up to five years. Time is money. As Anne Royston has to share her £20,000 a year, I only hope she has not given up her day job.
Kenneth Matheson

Access Officer
London Borough of Hammer-smith and Fulham

NHS charges

I have read with some interest Tim Russell's article "Why should the needy pay?" (*DN*, December).

Apart from heart trouble, I suffer from chronic asthma and have also been recently diagnosed as having emphysema.

I was prescribed a nebuliser by my consultant and, as a temporary measure, was loaned one from the hospital I attend. Like Margaret Escott, I was informed that I would have to purchase my own and was given the necessary order form and letter.

Being on Invalidity Benefit and qualifying for Income Support, I decided to approach the Social Fund for either a grant or loan. I was told, with great sympathy, that I could not be helped from this fund because there is a directive which states that no assistance is to be granted for any medical aids.

I am lucky because I have a family who are willing to purchase the nebuliser for me.

However, no matter what excuses health authorities or the Department of Health make, it would seem that they are ensuring the solution to the problem by the premature death of the patient!

C J Spooner-Harvey
Driffield, E Yorks

Motability explains

I am writing to comment on some of the information given in David Griffiths' article (*DN*, December).

It is certainly true that most advance payments on the Motability contract hire scheme rose quite dramatically on 1 October because of a steep increase in insurance premiums. The rise was not restricted to Motability - every motorist will be affected and there has been a large amount of media coverage.

The reason why there was such a sharp increase in advance payments is that three years' worth of insurance have to be included in the computation. They do not apply, of course, to cars hired before 1 October 1991.

Motability employs brokers who approach all the major insurers to obtain the best possible terms for our contract hire fleet. However, there has been a very heavy increase in the number and cost of insurance claims in the past year which resulted in a large increase in premiums.

The example of the VW Golf Driver automatic needs clarification. In June 1991, the advance payment was £1,193, but from July (for a short period) it was reduced to £561 by Volkswagen, as a special offer to Motability customers. In September the deposit went back to £1,193.

On 1 October, because of the increased insurance premiums, the initial deposit for that 1991 model became £1,570 (an increase of £377).

The price David quoted of £2,184 was correct for the 1992 model, which was previously £1,798 (an increase

of £386). He was therefore comparing prices on different models and a special discount rate against the normal rate.

I do not know which car he was quoting at £2,400, implying that the advance payment rental had doubled, but an increase of £1,200 would not have been caused only by an insurance increase.

These increases were indeed unfortunate and unwelcome (I myself have to find another £500 for my new Motability car). There were some cases where dealers did not inform our customers quickly enough, but many manufacturers and dealers accepted lower deposits than were required and Motability's charitable funds helped out in many other cases.

David also stated that private buyers get the option of spreading insurance payments, so why should Motability customers "stump up the lot at one go?"

In the past, we had a system of annual payments, which caused a lot of problems since many customers had difficulty in meeting them. For leases taken out since 1 October 1990, there is no additional annual charges for insurance and all premiums are included. The bulk of the costs of providing vehicles under the contract hire scheme, including insurance, is of course met by the weekly mobility allowance payments.

I can assure our customers that we will continue to obtain the best insurance package we can.

Ann Hodgett
Information Services Manager
Motability
Harlow, Essex

Worth passing on

I would like to tell readers of a couple of finds my wife and I made recently.

First, we had been looking for a variable-height double bed for about four years. There were plenty of singles but no-one seemed to make a double version other than the kind that sits you up, lays you down, lifts your legs and whistles Dixie.

At last, at Naidex, we came across Comfort Care by Relaxa Ltd (tel: 0904 701721) who said they would make us one to our specifications.

It is marvellous. It raises to a comfortable height for personal care, then lowers for easy transfer to and from a wheelchair. It looks just like a conventional bed and is finished to a high standard.

Second, we stayed for one week's bed and breakfast at Stratton Farm, near Wisbech (tel 0945 880162). The wheelchair-accessible room is excellent and of a very high standard, as are the breakfasts.

Sue and Derek King couldn't be more hospitable. I use an electrically powered Carchair and had no problems at all.

Michael Kirk
Burringham,
South Humberside

Your letters on charity advertising and images of disability in the media (see DN January) are rolling in. Do keep writing. We hope to print some of your comments in the March issue - Editor.

sic

A bit of a mux ip

We know they're all bright sparks at London's City University, but can they see into the future too? An invitation to "The Way Ahead -1992 and Beyond" conference on disabled people in Europe lists among the speakers "Viscount Ullswater, Minister for the Disabled". Shall we tell Mr Scott?

No way in

Fancy being a publications editor for the National Asthma Campaign? The first requirement on the list, deemed "essential", is "Does not require disabled access". With friends like that, who needs enemies?

Funny money

Further proof that *DN* reaches the parts that other newspapers don't reach came in the form of an anonymous donation for £50 signed "Henry the Eighth", address "heaven only knows". Thanks Henry, and if you can catch Rockefeller or the man who broke the bank at Monte Carlo, the address to send cheques to is *DN*, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ.

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Remain quietly celibate? Baloney

Adam Reynolds, sculptor and *DN's* art critic, marries Isabelle King this month. He rejects the accepted idea of boy-girl relationships and urges others not to be obsessed by their disabilities



Saint Valentine was a Roman martyr not known to be in any way connected with lovers. His feast day however, falls roughly at the time of the Roman festival of Lupercalia. I seem to remember this was a rather orgiastic affair involving unmarried men rushing about in wolf costumes.

According to Chaucer, 14 February is also the day on which birds choose their mates. Given the cold and the general lack of anything else to do in mid-February it is not really surprising that this habit should have spread to people.

I suppose it was partly with this aim of cheering up an otherwise gloomy month that we picked on mid-February to get married (though I must confess chance had just as much to do with it).

As news of this leaked, I got a call from *DN* asking me to contribute to a feature on "relationships".

So now I find myself wondering where on earth to begin...My own journey from the spotty insecurity of adolescence to the altar seems so haphazard that I cannot believe there are any clear lessons there. But perhaps I'm not the one to judge.

The way in which we get on with other people as friends, colleagues, clients, bosses, doctors, classmates, MPs, people on the bus etc., and of course those who we are just landed with (family) is probably the main way in which we express ourselves.

But the relationship between lovers presents the most crucial, complicated and generally nerve-racking situations we have to deal with. And the most rewarding.

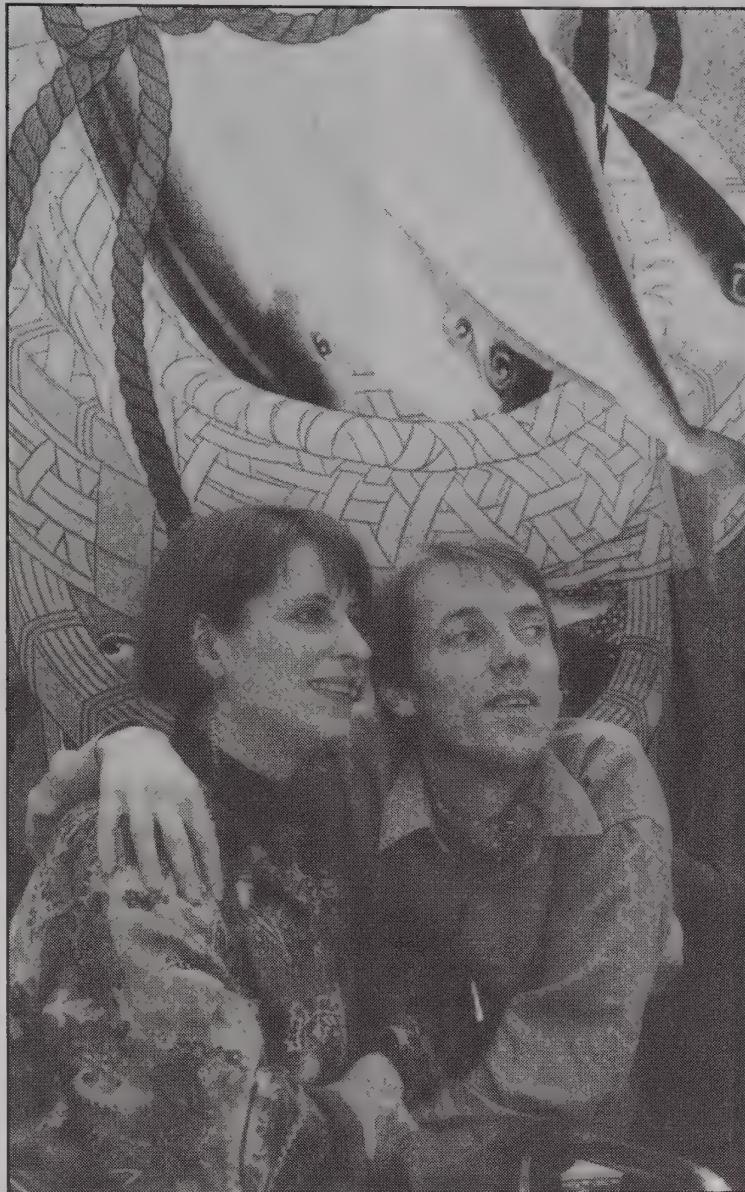
Love affairs do not just happen out of the blue. But when I was young I rather expected that it would all appear as if by magic.

Like almost anyone, I first began seriously to desire a sexual partner at an age when I was desperate to appear to fit in with everyone else.

Yet I was already aware that I had to find my own way of doing things, while other people could simply copy their elders. I found all this extremely confusing.

Looking back, I was also scared of winning. This now seems to me typical of many a shy, English, middle-class boy educated in an all boys school. At the time though, it felt very isolating.

The whole business of conforming also made me focus more clearly on my disability.



Art is the backdrop for the lives of both Isabelle and Adam: she works at the Whitechapel gallery, he runs his own.

GRAHAM BOOL PHOTOGRAPHY

Broad social assumptions affected the basic structure of how I related to other people.

Looking to the world beyond home, school and family, there seemed to be very few examples of disabled people dealing with life with the same expectations and desires as anyone else.

There seemed to be a common myth that when it came to sex disabled people don't, can't or even shouldn't. As with most myths, however, it was a mistake to assume that everyone really believed them.

This myth, together with the romantic images of boy-meets-girl stories, undoubtedly caused me much angst as an adolescent. As I grew older I became increasingly aware that all the problems which I thought were a result of my disability were in fact reasonably common.

Literature is packed with examples of the insecure lover: fearing rejection; unable to express his feelings; thinking too much and so doing nothing. I realized that certain character traits of mine were much my greatest barrier.

In the realm of relationships many people experience a high degree of insecurity about their

physical appearance. Indeed such hang-ups are probably the closest that many able-bodied people come to experiencing any of the conflicts that I associate with disability.

In my late teens and early twenties I used to derive a kind of perverse amusement from the fact that some women friends seemed to be convinced that the length of their noses made them physically undesirable. For my part, I felt that I had much stronger reasons, but in the end I think I was being just as neurotic and self-obsessed.

I think things really worked for me when I began to stop trying to force situations. Many people spend ages imagining scenes in which they declare their love and it all ends happily. The trouble is it never turns out quite as you imagine. It either goes horribly wrong or (as was usually the case with me) it all seems too stilted and you cannot go through with it.

Fortunately I had always put my friendships before anything else. I had always thought it was weird that many people's most intimate relationships were with people they did not

even particularly like.

Isabelle and I met in our first week at university and were the best of friends throughout our time there. We must have known each other for six or seven years before we became lovers. In fact, I vaguely remember we were each going out with someone else at the time!

It still strikes me as idiotic that physical attraction remains the principal starting-point for many couples. Not surprisingly it also helps maintain the old unequal roles of men and women.

I think that in my case we have managed to do away with many of these...but perhaps I'm not the one to ask.

It is easy for disabled people to become obsessed with their disabilities. When things do not go according to our plans or desires, we generally look for something or someone to blame: our father; the moon in scorpio; the oppressive State; the lie we told last Tuesday.

While we may sometimes be right when we do this, I think that just as often we simply pick the nearest, most obvious, thing that springs to mind.

So, for those of us whose physique does not begin to conform to some glossy advert or macho film star, there is a tendency to assume that we would avoid much nastiness if we remain quietly celibate. Baloney.

Love makes the world go round, they say. So, to celebrate another St Valentine's day, *DN* offers you three pages of ideas, advice, opinion and sheer fun!

p11 Adam Reynolds on finding love - he has

p12 Kevin Holmes on learning the social skills

p12 Parents talk about love and sex for their Down's syndrome children

p13 Are you a real romantic? Find out in *DN's* love quiz (and no cheating on the answers!)



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Parents say yes to love

Margaret Williamson says: Harry and I would be so lucky for Andrew to have a relationship. It would be wonderful...I'd support and encourage him all the way. Because I've had so much joy knowing Harry and being close to him, I want Andrew to have the same. When you are an adult you need more than your mum and dad...

Say Andrew married Sharon when they grew up? It would

24 parents of children with Down's Syndrome had the same positive reaction to Chris Goodey's question - should their children find love as adults?* Here are two views

seem right to them - they're not normal, they just shouldn't be participating in this sort of thing.

People still argue about sex before marriage, so the handicapped having sex must

At the end of the day it's the idea of them reproducing people like themselves that makes people anti-social against them.

I think if Andrew has a 50 per cent chance of having a child with Down's, that's great. At the end of the day, what's wrong with Down's? Really you should be talking about 99 per cent. It's just people's ignorance and fear, and I suppose also the mum and dad not being able to take the responsibility.

Bringing kids into the world is a big responsibility, and there again, would a Down's couple be capable? If the world was a decent place and there was the financial back-up system for them, but the world's not so lovely. But having said that, I love kids, and we would just muck in and help.

I could still see times when people could take advantage of them, especially girls. There's no getting away from that because normal people get taken advantage of. But that's life, you know - normal, mentally handicapped or Down's, whatever. It's a cruel world out there, but it's the same for everybody.



Margaret Williamson with her sons: Andrew, 5, Daniel, 3, and R, fourteen months. "Why shouldn't he be a loving grown-up?"

Ted Sparrowhawk says: I had preconceived ideas up until perhaps Laura was about four or five. I would have said no, because that's what people kept instilling in me in the books I read and the television programmes about sterilization...

When Laura was about five we thought about it and discussed it. I wouldn't stop her having a sex life...

As she gets older and mixes more socially and she has friends and they talk about things - I mean even now she's said "I want to get married" and she starts talking about babies because that's what they do in the juniors, and you've got to explain to her, so why at the end of the day should you deny her? I think if you're going to be part of society then you've got to accept what society has to offer.

It's the same as I try to do with my boys. You try to guide them the best way you can, but you don't know at the end of the day what they're going to do, and it's going to be the same with Laura...

If Laura wants to have someone

stay overnight I'm not going to stop her. She could have a girl friend, they could still get up to hand, but I'm not panky: we have preconceived ideas, but two girls wouldn't do it, but in our society two girls do, and men do. There's this bloke at work. He's got a feller, but it doesn't stop them being good friends with him.

It would be hypocritical of me. I hadn't known someone who was gay with the same sex then perhaps they would be shocked even to think about it. But because I've seen two of them really, really happy, it wouldn't shock me for Laura.

Like most things, unless something happens to you, you don't think about it, do you? You just think that society's taught you to think

*The interviews, with parents from the London Borough of Newham, are from Chris Goodey's *Living in the World*, £6, from the Newham Centre Education Bookshop, 74 Barking Road, London E13, tel: 0201 472 2000. A fuller report is being prepared for the Down's Syndrome Association, tel: 081 682 4001.



Dad and daughter: Ted Sparrowhawk with Laura, aged 10.

be the most beautiful thing in the world. But I don't think people would appreciate it.

People don't think mentally handicapped people are capable of sex. It's ignorance really. People don't want to know because it just doesn't

be a taboo subject. To do both is worse! But I think it's nice.

It's back to the same old medical thing: is he capable? But that's not the question. He's such a loving child, why shouldn't he be a loving grown-up?

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"Hi, Mum! Can I bring a friend home for tea tomorrow night? His name's Robert and we met at college. Well, actually, he's a bit more than a friend. Thanks, Mum, I know you'll like him, he's got a great personality.

"By the way, Dad, have you got a couple of planks? Oh, just to put up to the front door so he can get his wheelchair up the steps.

"Mum, I'll have to sit next to him at the table because I'll have to feed him. Mum, what are you doing on the floor? Dad, I think Mum's fainted!

"Dad, did you know your face has gone all purple?"

This is a fiction, of course, but unfortunately it is typical of the reaction most young people would get from relatives if they were "silly" enough to consider having a relationship with someone with a disability, particularly a less

Dealing with a non-U disability

Kevin Holmes knows the problems and floats an idea

socially acceptable one like cp, which may involve some speech impediment or loss of facial muscle control.

The "differences" are reinforced from an early age because children with cp are often educated apart from their able-bodied peers; they do not wear "in" clothes, or share the same teenage experiences.

Earlier this year, an introduction agency in the north of England opened its membership to people with disabilities. It advertised in local papers. Most of the applicants turned out to have cp.

(When the agency tried to extend the membership by writing over 50 letters to residential centres and national and local charities, it got just one reply - negative. So much for "forward-looking" managers and carers. The agency gave up.)

The particular physical problems of a disability like cp leave many people lonely or restricted in their choice of friends and partners.

What is often needed, as I know from meeting them, is support and encouragement to help build up social skills - things like how to keep clean and tidy, how to show friendliness when you meet someone,

how to share a conversation instead of monopolising it, and so on.

These could be taught in short courses in a residential centre, or better still, on weekends away where people could be encouraged to introduce themselves, holiday weekend activity courses to meet others. And, finally, there could be ongoing support, maybe more weekends away, for people who have found each other but have no experience of setting up home.

The Midlands region of the Spastics Society has already made some progress along these lines. Groups of disabled people are spending free weekends away, comfortable, hotels meeting each other and discussing subjects of employment or independent living.

A new series, planned to start in April, could include a weekend of relationships, if enough people like to go.

If you are interested, or want to comment on the idea, do contact

Kevin Holmes, The Spastics Society, Midlands Regional Office, Sharncliffe House, Clews Rd, Oakenshaw, Redditch, Worcs, tel.: (0527) 500000.

Are you the real romantic?

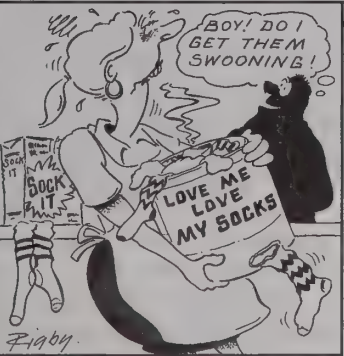
Find out in *DN*'s light hearted love quiz. Answers on page 22

1. You're at a party when you spy someone interesting across the room. Do you:
a. gaze at them all evening, wishing you had the nerve to say hello?
b. ask them if they want to test your mattress springs?
c. glide over and ask if they happened to read that fascinating article in last month's *DN* about windsurfing in Woolawonga?

2. You want to ask someone out. How do you do it?
a. by letter - you feel too embarrassed to phone them?
b. you TELL them that they're coming out with you and you don't want no for an answer?
c. you do it the way everyone else does - through a friend!

3. You are out on a date with someone who doesn't use a wheelchair. Do you:
a. kill yourself to try and keep up with them?
b. "stroll along" in your own time, keeping up a relaxed conversation as you go?
c. insist they sit on your lap?

4. You've booked a table for dinner, but you find the restaurant, despite its assurances, is inaccessible. Do you:
a. apologise for being a



nuisance?
b. forget about your date and hold a demo then and there?
c. take your date for a take-away but come back the next night with 50 hungry friends, a *DN* news crew and some VERY searching questions?

5. It's time for the first kiss. When do you make your move?
a. you don't - who would want to kiss you?
b. three minutes after you say hello - why wait?
c. somewhere where there's moonlight and magic in the air?

6. Your lover's birthday is coming up. Do you:
a. send them flowers through the post, anonymously?
b. ignore it - they know you love them anyway?
c. buy them red roses and a subscription to *DN* (what



better way to say "I love you")?
7. You are treating your date to dinner. But at the restaurant, the waiter slots into the "does he take sugar?" routine. Do you:
a. play along with it, it doesn't really matter?
b. throw soup at him?
c. remind him firmly that you are the host/hostess?

8. You have some money saved and want to take your amour on a surprise holiday. Do you:
a. book two train tickets to see your granny in Skegness?
b. resist the foolish impulse and buy a video instead?
c. whisk yourselves off to Paris to watch the sun set over the Seine?

8. Your partner phones up unexpectedly and asks if he/she can come round for something to eat. Do you:
a. get your mum to come round and cook for you?
b. direct them to the nearest fish and chip shop?
c. produce a *cordon bleu* delight in five minutes flat?

9. You tell your parents that you've met someone. They demand to see them. Do you:
a. agree immediately - you don't want to do anything to offend your parents?
b. tell them you appreciate their concern but YOU want to get to know the person first?
c. organise a huge surprise party for your partner, inviting all your aunts, uncles, nephews and nieces too?

10. It's Valentine's day. Do you celebrate by:
a. blowing your lover a kiss

down the phone?
b. asking your amour to wash your socks to show how much they really care?
c. serenading and smooching the night away?
11. How would you propose?
a. by putting an ad in *DN*?
b. you don't - you wait for them to do it?
c. by sky-writing "I love you - marry me" in the clouds?

12. You can't get a lift home as the only accessible bus left three months ago. Do you:
a. say you don't mind waiting till the next bus comes (Christmas 1993)?
b. insist on coming home with your date?
c. explain the situation and ask if they'd mind you



getting friendly with their living room floor?

13. What would be your ideal evening?
a. curled up with the remote control?
b. curled up with your bank book?
c. curled up with your sweetheart?

14. Your partner suggests going away for the



PETER RIGBY

weekend. Do you:
a. suggest you book a room for a fortnight instead?
b. refuse to speak to them again - what sort of person do they think you are?
c. say you think it's a good idea, but why not have a day out together first?

15. Your favourite dance?
a. the wallflower?
b. dancing's for cissies - why not just go straight to bed?
c. the waltz?

16. Your flatmate comes in while you and your partner are in the bath. Do you:
a. duck under the water and hope they go away soon?
b. fly into a rage and blame your partner for having the stupid idea in the first place?
c. relax - you've locked the door anyway?

17. What's your favourite song?

a. "Love me love my dog"?
b. "D'ya think I'm sexy?"
c. "As time goes by"?
18. Your favourite film is:
a. Love Story - you think it's tragic when Ali McGraw dies?
b. Fatal Attraction?
c. Brief Encounter?

19. You are getting married. Do you wear:
a. what your mum thinks you should?
b. jeans and a t-shirt (why waste money?)
c. full morning suit/veil - after all, you'll only get married once?

20. You have now been together for 40 years (!). Do you:
a. still wonder what they see in you?
b. curse the day you ever read this quiz?
c. look forward to the next 40?

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BOOKS

The Alexander Technique

by Richard Brennan
(Element Books, Longmead,
Shaftsbury, Dorset, £4.99)

The Alexander Technique

by Judith Leibowitz and Bill
Connington
Souvenir Press, £14.99

Of all the "alternative therapies", the Alexander Technique is possibly one of the most puzzling. Very little has been published about this fascinating technique which, says Mr Brennan, does not set out to "cure" specific symptoms, but to help "uncover and change those harmful and unconscious habit patterns which, all too often, are the underlying cause of a problem."

Disabled people have physical tension that may have gone unnoticed for months or even years purely because of the way in which we have to use our bodies. These tensions are often responsible for aches and pains that accumulate with age. As this book points out, "simply sitting or standing in an unbalanced way will cause certain muscles to be constantly under stress. If these ways become habitual then, sooner or later, we will have to pay the price."

Backache is one of the most common results of bad posture along with high blood pressure, migraine, asthma, arthritis, depression and



Museums without Barriers, by the Foundation de France and the International Council of Museums, takes a worldwide look at how museums can be made accessible to all, what work has been done already, and what the pioneers are doing. Routledge, £20.

PIERRE MICHAUD

insomnia.

An Alexander Technique session has two parts:
* helping the pupil detect and let go of excessive tension that has been held unconsciously in the body

* helping the pupil find different ways of moving that are easier and more efficient, thus reducing wear and tear on

body structure and internal organs.

Leibowitz and Connington's book is somewhat larger and heavier than Brennan's, but it has very good self help exercises, showing you how to stand and lift, sit and bend and move your body when you are driving or sitting at a computer. It aims to help you devise your own self help programme to suit your particular lifestyle. (Through reading it, I became aware of the unnecessary strain I put on my wrists while writing by not using arm rests to lean my elbows on.)

The book's first half gives a thorough grounding in the history, principals and practice of the method. The second half describes the Leibowitz Procedures which are not the same thing as the Alexander Technique, but arise from

Judith Leibowitz's 20 years teaching of the Technique at the Juilliard music school in the USA. These "procedures" are a series of movements designed to help you observe yourself objectively in movement and rest, to help you learn how the body moves when it is used well, and then to apply the procedures to every day activities.

Although it is preferable to have a lesson from a trained Alexander Technician - costing around £30 - this book is a helpful second best (it is already a best seller in the USA and Germany).

Isobel Ward

Beyond Community Care: Normalisation and Integration Work

ed. by Shulamit Ramon
(Macmillan and MIND,
MIND mail order service, 4th
Floor, 24-32 Stephenson Way,
London NW1 2HD, £9.99 plus
50p p&sp)

This very useful book sets out to address the issues around normalisation, defined as "the principle by which people with a disability have the right to lead a valued ordinary life, based on the belief in their equality as human beings and citizens."

Comprising seven papers from well-known contributors such as David Brandon and Julia Segal, each paper has an extensive reference to further reading and a good author/subject index.

Editor Shulamit Ramon writes: "This collection is not intended as a DIY manual but as an exploration of the richness and complexity of the approach, which advocates the blending of theoretical and applied knowledge, attitudes with conceptual frameworks and a range of skills to match."

In an easy-to-read style it covers: the background dimensions of normalisation work; experiencing normalisation from the user's view; the professional perspective; creative programming; public participation in decision making; and turning principles

into policies.

Useful examples of projects in Cardiff, Wales, Birmingham and Avon are given. Consumer participation is identified positively and a realistic view of public attitudes towards people with disabilities identifies where further work is needed.

This is a very practical "ideas" reference book which has some challenging questions too. I was particularly attracted to the one posed by Mike Lawson in his contribution, "A Recipient's View": "If you are in a position to help people in crisis, ask yourself WHY? The answer can be most illuminating!"

Mike Long

Unexpected Healing

by Jennifer Rees Larcombe
(Hodder and Stoughton, £4.99)

This autobiography is about being on the receiving end of a miracle.

Jennifer suffered the effects of encephalitis for 10 years and was in so much pain that she was given heroin regularly. When she asked if she would become a junkie, the nurse replied: "We don't worry about that in terminal cases, love".



Jennifer and her husband Tony Larcombe

Before the miracle occurred, Jennifer needed a lot of personal care from social services and her family. She tells you clearly about her life - for example, how she often had to be fed and went around wearing nappies.

Unexpected Healing also sets out how she felt on the morning of 14 June 1990 when she suddenly found herself able to get up, walk about and do exactly what she felt like. The reactions of her family, friends and others are discussed in an interesting and informative way.

If you haven't heard of her work before, this book is a good place to start. And at under £5 a copy it's good value for money. I met Jennifer last year and have kept in touch ever since, so I must admit to a certain bias. But speaking as a Christian and as someone who can only lose their disabilities through a miracle, I find the book provides encouragement but does not give false hope.

Dave Preston

Book news

Two homespun titles from Hannah Hauxwell, *Innocent Abroad* and *Daughter of the Dales*, are now out on tape from Random Century, £7.99 each from bookshops.

We Can Speak for Ourselves, by Paul Williams and Bonnie Shoultz, looks at self-advocacy by people with learning disabilities. The 1991 edition includes an update on how the self-

advocacy movement has developed since the book was first published in 1982. Souvenir Press, £8.95.

Where Shall I Live? by David Bookbinder, explores housing options for older people. Age Concern England, £4.95.

New from Child's Play are *Baby Bear Cub's Busy Day* and *Round and Round the Garden*. Suit ages 2-6. £2.50 each. Tel: (0793) 616286.

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FILM

Afraid of the dark

Director Mark Peploe's debut film is summed up perfectly by its title: it is a tale of the fear brought on in a young boy as he contemplates going blind.

Previously, Peploe was known as the writer on such notable ventures as Antonioni's *The Passenger*, starring Jack Nicholson, and Bertolucci's Oscar-winning *The Last Emperor*. It should come as no surprise, then, that he is inclined to infuse his projects heavily with ideas. In *Afraid of the Dark* there's some Freud thrown in, with Lucas (the young boy), witnessing his mother and father kissing passionately, eyes are spiked always symbolic) and the advent of a baby introduces a touch of sibling rivalry.

The look suggests the dream-like world of a child's fantasy, and blindness is used as a metaphor to examine fear of the unknown. Yes, we are in the same old cinematic territory where disability is exploited to no profitable



Lucas (Ben Keyworth) is consumed by fears - but are they real or imaginary?

advantage where the real issues are concerned.

A bespectacled Lucas (Ben Keyworth) grows anxious over the disturbing events unfolding in his neck of London, where a mysterious attacker stalks the streets preying on blind women. Lucas is naturally worried as both his mother (Fanny Ardant) and her best friend Rose (Clare Holman), are blind and at risk.

As the scene shifts to Rose's wedding day, you ask yourself: "Is this really how things are?" Suddenly, Rose is Lucas's

half-sister, his mother is nine months pregnant, neither of them is blind and Lucas is facing an operation to save his eyesight.

With the birth of the baby and Lucas's inner turmoil reaching violent proportions, the film heads towards a climax where the real and the imaginary collide.

The high point of *Afraid of the Dark* is its structure, with the perspective shifting skilfully from Lucas's point of view to a more objective one.

Also worth mentioning are

the references to charity for blind people - posters, guide dog collection boxes, etc - which appear in the picture as if to taunt Lucas rather than offer support.

Ultimately, the film is torn between being a thriller on the one hand and self-consciously wanting to have something to say on the other. Disability is manipulated as a device to serve both interests.

Andy Kimpton-Nye

Afraid of the Dark opens on 21 February



The cast of *The Attraction*, a musical from the integrated Chicken Shed Theatre Company, celebrate their successful run at London's Place theatre in December. As well as playing to packed houses, the cast appeared on *Wogan*. They hope to take the show on tour in the autumn. Donations please to Chicken Shed Theatre Company, 62 Grovelands Road, Palmers Green, London N13 4RH.

Look out for
A World Turned Upside Down, a musical play by the Hijinx Theatre Company for young people with learning difficulties. On tour till April. Tel: 071 354 0110.

Another chance to see The

Big 8 wheelchair basketball tournament. From 25 January on Channel 4.

Experience the exhibits at the BP re-Vision exhibition. 18 January-22 February and 6 March-11 April. Greenwich. Tel: 081-316 2752.

VIDEO

1. GODFATHER III (CIC). Coppola's operatic mafia epic visits Vatican corruption.

in Deep South drama.

2. SILENCE OF THE LAMBS (20-20). Petite FBI rookie Jodie Foster pitted against skin fetishist serial killer.

4. LA STORY (Guild). Steve Martin's affectionate comedy about Los Angeles.

3. PARIS TROUT (Palace). Mounting tensions, triangular affair and bigotry

5. DANCES WITH WOLVES (Guild). New Age Western from Hollywood's leading liberal, Costner.

Andy Kimpton-Nye

Chart: *The Video Palace*.

TV

Good drama about disability is rare, so it's a pleasure to praise *Just A Normal Girl* (C4, 7 Jan).



Made for children's ITV and shown originally in 1988, the story centres around a teenager, disabled through a car accident, whose main problem is her traumatized father.

The three main disabled characters were played by genuinely disabled actors, with many other disabled people appearing in the background.

True, there was some stereotypical "I'm bitter because I'm disabled" sentiment, but this was turned into an "I'm really only upset because of my father" feeling. There were lessons here for adult drama.

Just A Normal Girl was certainly an improvement on the portrayal of disability in the three big budget movies over Christmas. In *Rainman* (BBC1, 23 Dec), *No Way Out* (BBC1, 24 Dec) and *Midnight Crossing* (ITV, 24 Dec) none of the disabled people featured was typical of the disability community. In *Midnight Crossing*, for example, the character claimed to be blind as a cover for criminal activities! There's still no sign that film makers are trying to make films that show what disability is really like.

Ray of Hope (C4, 26 Dec) and *Equinox* (C4, 15 Dec) were heavily concerned with explaining physical impairment.

At the start of *Ray of Hope*, Ray Kennedy, the ex-Arsenal and Liverpool footballer, spent a long time retelling his football history. Anyone who was inclined to watch the programme would have known about his track record. The point about going into so much detail was to throw into relief his new physical state of Parkinson's disease. Regrettably, the intention seemed to be to arouse sympathy and pity. Instilling negative feeling is not encouraging to anyone who has just been diagnosed with this condition.

Equinox featured current research into minimizing the effects of arthritis. But in explaining the dire necessity for such research, the programme makers felt it necessary to underline the painful element of the condition. Again, this was negative imagery.

As I write, I've only seen the first of the three parts of *Goodbye Cruel World* (BBC2, 6 Jan). I'll give a full review next month, but the omens are not good.

Chris Davies

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Share Your Problems

with Ann Darnbrough

True love will always find its own way



Truly, Madly, Deeply, a wonderful description of how we feel when falling in love. In fact, it is the title of a film about Nina, a woman falling apart after the death of her husband, who finds that nothing can ease the pain. She just wants him to come back to her. So he does - as a ghost.

I haven't seen the film, so I don't know what happens next. Being a practical person as well as a romantic, I wonder how they manage their sex lives! Him not really being there could be tricky, if you see what I mean. Making love requires a certain solid bodily presence: the caressing whisper of a ghostly emanation wouldn't be the same thing. I'd be drawing the bedclothes up more tightly under my chin as the chilly spectre hovered near, rather than casting them off with gay abandon.

"Whatever's got into her this month?" you'll be saying. Well, I did warn you - it's the St Valentine's Day romantic excitement. Who knows what protestations of love we may receive from unknown admirers? To be honest, I don't really expect any secret cards, but you never know.

To be more serious, to love and be loved is one of the most fundamental of all human needs. As adults, sexual expression and the warmth of relationships can be the well-spring of some of our greatest happiness, while the lack of such fulfilment can lead to frustration and sometimes the most profound and unremitting misery.

Disabled people feel that the attitudes of able-bodied people often compound this misery by failing to recognise people with disabilities as sexual beings. We still seem to have to emphasise the simple truth

that sexuality has to do with something we are, not something we do.

Having said that, to express ourselves physically, we need to be able to "do", and that may be difficult. It might not be possible to make love spontaneously if careful preparations are necessary. For some couples, intercourse may not be possible or only rarely obtainable, but it can be a great mistake to see the goal of intercourse as the only reason for making love - it is only a part of our sexual activity. Gentle and prolonged lovemaking with no "goal" in sight, where sexual activity is less of a tumultuous release and more of a prolonged sharing, can bring wonderful and satisfying experiences.

Ed Hooper, writing about sex after his injury (*DN*, March 1990), revealed: "It was quite possible, they were saying (in a peer group session on sexuality), for only one of the partners - or neither - to reach orgasm, as we defined it pre-disability, and still have a most fulfilling encounter. It's true. My brain hasn't figured out I'm supposed to be asexual. It keeps sending erotic messages. But the focus of where I receive those messages has changed from my penis to the other areas of my body where I do have feeling: my shoulders, neck, lips, ears. With intimate contact in these areas, coupled with the knowledge that I am giving pleasure too - by kissing, touching, embracing - my heart begins to race, my head gets warm, my mind surges, aggressively pursuing its feelings. The excitement builds to a level of intense pleasure - then subsides towards contentment. Yes, it's like an orgasm: not with the intensity

brought on by ejaculation, though the loss of control is similar. It's in no way 'merely' a mental phenomenon. Sexual pleasure now is a physical and mental meld."

Whether we are able-bodied or disabled, we all have times when our sex lives are less than fulfilling, or non-existent. This is made worse by the fact that most of us find it difficult to talk about any problems we may be experiencing. If we were able to do so, we would find a great sharing of common experiences and we would realise that we are not alone in how we feel.

In November I went to a National Federation of the Blind meeting on sex. As one delegate said: "Sex is right on top of a disabled person's mind, but we don't often get the opportunity to talk about it." He could have said that goes for able-bodied people too! Some people with visual impairment said the biggest problem was meeting the right person in the first place. I'm sure other disabled people would agree.

In the autumn edition of *Disability Today*, the magazine of the Northern Ireland Council on Disability (NICOD), Michael Morgan writes about the emotional consequences of disability and says that these are far more

important than any physical difficulties involved. These emotional difficulties encompass loneliness, isolation, and numbing anxiety. "The greatest difficulty faced by disabled people," says the writer "is in the area of sexual contacts and interaction. Putting it crudely, it's not how to do it that causes the main problems, it's finding someone to do it with. This is a problem of social opportunity and sexuality, not just sex."

We are frequently told that sexual activity is natural to all of us, but the truth is that fulfilling sexual relationships are complex and demand a sensitive understanding of our own reactions and those of our partner, whether heterosexual or gay. Sex education (which tends to focus on biological facts) is not always as enlightening as it should be, but some disabled people may not have had any at all. They have been excluded from knowledge which should have been theirs of right.

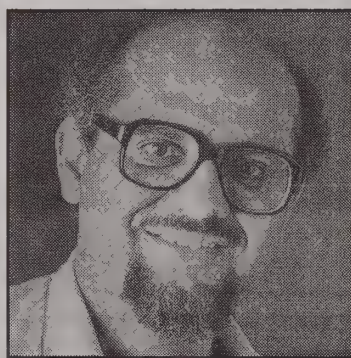
There are now, however, many publications available, some of which can be obtained by post - send for publications lists from the Family Planning Association and from Relate. The Royal National Institute for the Blind has a list of books available on tape or in braille. SPOD (Association to

Aid the Sexual and Personal Relationships of People with a Disability) has a publications list and counselling line. In addition, SPOD has a country-wide network of counsellors and can usually put disabled people in touch with a counsellor near to their home. And of course there is *DN*'s own telephone counsellor, Lin Berwick, with whom you can share your problems direct, to (04024) 77582. Calibre, a lending library of books on standard compact cassettes for anyone who cannot read printed matter either through poor sight or through difficulty handling or reading, has around 3,000 recorded titles. They will be glad to send membership details and a sample list.

One book warmly recommended for its discussion of personal relationships is John Hull's *Touching the Rock*, written from the author's experiences as a blind man. This is available from Calibre on tape, or in print, price £4.99 plus 30p p&p, from Arrow Small Order Department, PO Box 29, Douglas, Isle of Man.

SPOD, tel: 071-607 8851.
Relate, tel: (0788) 573241.
Family Planning Association, tel: 071-636 7866. *NICOD*, tel: (0232) 491011.

PROFILE



Kenyan-born cameraman Mo Amin was awarded an MBE in the New Year's Honours List.

Mo, 48, has filmed countless wars, riots and revolutions in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. But he is best known for his moving television coverage of the 1984 Ethiopian famine which inspired Live Aid and led to an international famine relief effort.

He is now back at work after losing his left arm in an ammunition dump explosion in Addis Ababa last June. His sound recordist, John Mathai, was killed when a Visnews and BBC team were hit by the blast as they arrived to film the scene of an earlier explosion.

"There was an enormous bang. I remember seeing John fall, but I didn't know he was dead. Moments later a rocket hit my left arm and I fell into a ditch. When I tried to touch my left arm I discovered it was in tatters," he said.

Mo, who is Visnews' Africa

Mo Amin

bureau chief, refused to believe specialists in Nairobi and London when they told him he would never work again.

Thanks to the help of a specially adapted TV camera and a computer controlled bionic arm, Mo proved the experts wrong and was back in action in September, covering the Commonwealth Heads of State meeting in Harare.

The artificial arm was custom built by John Billock, clinical director of the Warren Rehabilitation and Engineering Centre in Ohio, America.

It is electronically controlled by his upper body and upper arm muscles and looks and behaves like a natural arm.

Mo is delighted with the result, even though it is very heavy. "This is because I asked it to be solidly built, as I'll be filming in areas where I can get hit by rockets or missiles.

"I also asked for it to be powered by the same voltage battery as my camera so that I can power my camera from my arm and vice versa."

Mo travelled to America to find an artificial arm because he could not find what he wanted in Britain. "The best limb I was offered here had a hook. It would have been useless for my job," said Mo. His search was filmed for a BBC documentary to be shown later this year.

"It took me about three months to get used to the arm.

I was offered some training in America but turned it down because I didn't think they would have much experience of training one-armed cameramen."

Mo, who is married to Dolly and has a 21-year-old son, is delighted with his MBE. "I just wish my father had lived to see the day."

He made his name covering the 1964 Zanzibar revolution and was awarded the British Television News Cameraman of the Year award in 1969 for his on-the-spot coverage of the assassination of Kenyan cabinet minister, Tom Mboye.

Since then, Mo has achieved countless scoops, including an exclusive interview with Idi Amin after he fled Uganda.

He won the Royal Television Society Journalism Award for his coverage of the Ethiopian famine.

Since resuming his career, Mo has been busy working on his latest book, *Journey Through the Seychelles*. It is the latest in a series of 40 books he has done on the culture, wildlife and landscapes of different regions.

"The arm has taken some getting used to but I don't feel bitter about the accident because I realise I'm very lucky to be alive."

BBC newscaster Michael Buerk, who has often worked with Mo, said: "He is a very brave and effective cameraman whose pictures did such a lot to help the starving people of Ethiopia."

Tim Russell

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Alison Rowat reports
on the future of
clothing workshops

Choices and dignity at a snip

Terry Gearing from Bishop's Cleeve was dreading her great niece's wedding because she had nothing to wear. As someone who uses a wheelchair and hasn't grown since she was eight, her problem couldn't be solved by a trip to the High Street.

Instead, she visited a clothing workshop which tailor-makes clothes for severely disabled people who can't buy them anywhere else.

The result, an emerald green trouser suit with matching blouse, made the day. "I'd still have gone, but it made a difference knowing I could hold my own with the able-bodied guests. Instead of dreading the event, I looked forward to it."

Similar testimonies are pinned to the noticeboard of Disability Clothing Designs (DCD) in Gloucester, where Ms Gearing is one of 200 customers.

Run by Philip Porter and Julia Free, both tailors, the workshop is one of a dwindling band. In 1988 there were 20; today there are nine.

Till 1988, workshops were financed by the Community Programme, which aimed at getting skilled unemployed people back to work.

But when the Community Programme was replaced by Employment Training, funding became dependent on offering training and many workshops lost their grants.

Now they have to raise money wherever they can, by fundraising, from charities, or by offering training. Two - Disability Clothing Designs in Gloucester, and Fashion

21, discovered DCD five years ago, his grandmother made most of his clothes. As he grew older, her skills couldn't keep up with his needs or fashion sense. When Andrew needed a school blazer, for example, he was told it would cost £150 to have tailor-made. He did without.

"Coats and trousers are the two hardest things to buy. If they're long in the leg, they'll be massive round the waist and stuff like that. With coats, if you have the body width to do it up, the arms will be flapping on the ground."

Mr Vaughan has had jeans, a jacket, suits, a raincoat, and even a wizard's costume (for a "role play" game) made.

"It's something other people take for granted. They think 'Oh, I'm going out with my mates,' and they can go and buy a pair of jeans or a t-shirt. Being able to wear something identical to what they are wearing is very important, especially to a young disabled person. When you are young you don't want to stand out in a crowd because you stand out anyway."

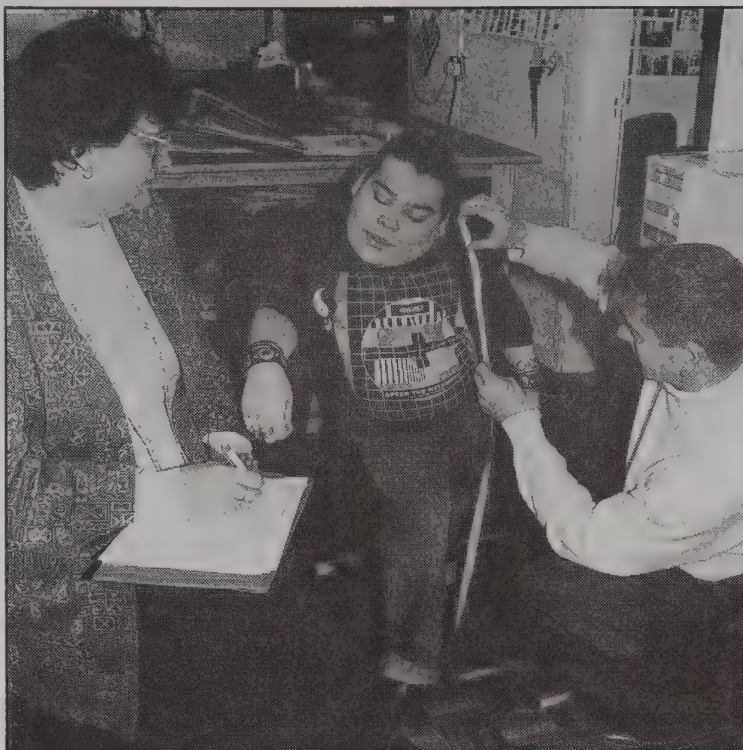
There is no such thing as a typical customer. Among DCD's other clients are babies who have brittle bones and need easy-open clothes, retired miners in a local day centre who need trousers to wear in wheelchairs, and a young woman who has detachable bibs made in the same fabric as her dresses.

They all get the same thing they would in the High Street - clothes they want or need at prices they can afford. Yet that is where the comparison with

but she was charged £40.

Customers also get a quality of service which is far removed from the High Street. The first consultation usually involves discussing with the

the broader context of how clothing can be provided for all disabled people rather than from the perspective of one particular type of supplier." In any case, it argues, there is no



Julia Free and Philip Porter fit Andrew Vaughan. DAVE TAYLOR

customer what they want (and what is practical), and which fabrics, colours and patterns they like. Wherever possible, the customer is encouraged to go shopping for the fabrics. DCD will also go to a customer's home and sometimes on shopping trips. From start to finish, garments take around six weeks to make.

This level of service doesn't come cheap. Since sales don't cover costs, the £40,000 a year needed to run DCD also comes from the Gloucester and Cheltenham joint area health authority fund, Gloucester county and city councils, the Smiths Charity (London), Tewkesbury Borough Council, Cheltenham and Borough Council, Gloucester Lions and local firms.

"We are relatively secure, but by no means are we safe," said Mr Porter. "If we don't raise that money every April we're out on our ears."

After MPs and *DN* (*DN* March) highlighted the clothing workshop crisis, the Department of Health asked the independent Social Policy Research Unit (SPRU) to look at how workshops operated and how they could be supported in the future.

Published last October, the SPRU report proposed setting up an independent emergency fund to which workshops could apply for help. "In the longer term," it advised, "local authorities should shoulder the main responsibility for funding core costs, either contractually or on a 'fee per client' basis."

But the Government has refused to set up an emergency fund, saying it "must look at

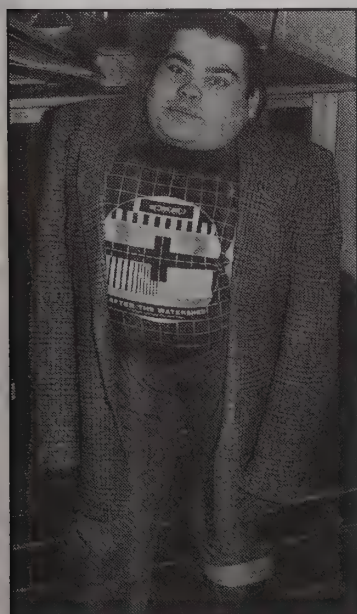
NHS funded rather than putting it on to councils to say 'We have this much money so this many disabled people can go out this year'."

Looking at the "broader context" doesn't help either. "What they are not doing is dealing with people who can't make do with that clothing. There is no alternative for the people we are dealing with."

Part of the problem is estimating how many people would benefit from workshops. The SPRU put it between 40,000 and 100,000 - "a small minority, but one likely to grow."

Regardless of political and statistical arguments, Philip Porter is convinced of the service's value: "It gives people so much more freedom. Suddenly, there's a world out there that they can get to, or it's just one less problem to think about."

Bassetlaw Fashion Services for the Disabled, tel: (0777) 860206. *CEDEMP Fashion Service for the Disabled*, tel: (0642) 479948. *Clothing Matters*, tel: (0380) 871781. *Disability Clothing Designs*, tel: (0452) 309461. *Fashion for the Disabled*, tel: (0382) 68296. *Fashion Services for People with Disabilities*, tel: (0274) 597487. *Marion Karpel Fashion for Disabled*, tel: 081-907 3036. *Queen Elizabeth's Foundation for the Disabled*, tel: (0737) 356222. *Spinning Jenny*, tel: (0232) 351370. *SPRU report*, £3, tel: (0904) 433608.



Jacket from the High Street



Raincoat made by DCD

Services for People with Disabilities in Bradford - get money from councils. The Spastics Society has helped set up the Clothing Matters workshop in Wiltshire, and pays the clothing adviser's salary. From April, Clothing Matters hopes to get money from local authorities.

Before Andrew Vaughan,

the High Street ends and the problems begin.

Although individual tailoring is time consuming and expensive, workshops set their prices according to what they think disabled people can afford, rather than what the garment costs to make. Terry Gearing's trouser suit, for example, cost £160 to make,

legal framework for it to fund workshops (*DN*, Dec 1991).

On councils funding workshops, the Department said "...this sort of local support may well be appropriate, and in future it will fit in well with our community care reforms."

According to Philip Porter, money is needed now and it should come from central government. "It has to be

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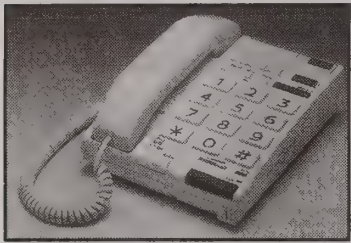
DN2/92

Feeling secure in your home

You may have read about the spate of attacks over the Christmas period on elderly disabled people in their homes. Help the Aged do not think such attacks are on the increase, but here is some useful equipment that could let you and your family sleep easier at night.

Why not invest in an **automatic-switch outside light** from Ridley Electronics? When it is dark the light comes on if the sensor detects movement, hopefully scaring off any unwelcome visitors. £60 (ex VAT), tel: 081-558 7112.

Locking your doors can be a problem for people with arthritis. The **BEST 34/35H** is a range of mortice locks from Wadsworth Security Products. Tactile knobs and large bow keys are available. These fit on to standard handles to provide greater grip and ease of turning. £70-£130 (ex VAT and p&p), tel: (0737) 360512.



Wessex Medical Equipment makes an **intercom exterior door entry system**. With this you can lock and unlock the front door from anywhere in the home. £611 plus £60-£120 for the intercom (ex VAT and installation). Tel: (0794) 830303.

Windows are particularly vulnerable to burglars. The **Cam Opener** (above right)

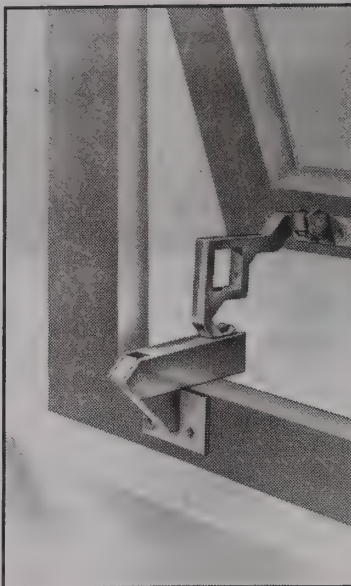
from Wellington can be used on windows with hinges at the top. Fitted to the window and the cill, it allows the window to be only partially opened without obstructing the view. Manufactures recommended price £8.35 (ex VAT) from builders merchants. For your local stockist, tel: (0902) 305511.

One way to confuse thieves

CHECKOUT

is to pretend to be in when you are out. Ridley Electronics sells an **automatic curtain puller** which will open and close the curtains at pre-set times or another model which reacts to light, opening your curtains at dawn and closing them at dusk. A remote control transmitter is available so that you can open and close your curtains with the touch of a button any time of the day or night. £188 plus £22-£60 for the transmitter (ex VAT and p&p), tel as above.

Keeping in contact with people can be a problem if you have limited mobility. The telephone may be the best way to summon help and make you feel more secure. The **Bina-tone Speakeasy** (left) has all the usual facilities of a modern phone, like a re-dial and memory facility. It is also hearing-aid compatible, has a volume-controlled ring and a light which flashes when the phone rings. The buttons are large with concave surfaces and raised numbers. It can be used hands-free. Retailers recommended price £39.99 (inc VAT) from Rumbelows,



Comet and other large electrical stores. For your nearest Rumbelows stockist, tel: (0992) 31988.

Lifeline, the emergency alarm system from Tunstall Telecom is a full-time community care alarm system which works through a telephone line. When you summon help you are connected to a control centre which can identify you. A neck pendant is standard so help can be summoned from anywhere in the home. The system can be bought or rented. To buy, £225 with a £90 annual monitoring charge. To rent, there is a £95 installation fee and a £135 a year monitoring charge, minimum 2 years. (All prices ex VAT). Tel: (0977) 662480.

If you are worried that your home is not secure, a police crime prevention officer will call round and give you free advice. Telephone your local police station. The number will be in the phone book.

WHAT'S ON

Spinal Injuries Seminar at Disabled Living Services, 4 St Chads Street, Cheetham, Manchester M8 8QA on 13 February. £35 including lunch. Contact Mrs B J Dickinson, tel: 061-832 3678.

Lobbying Whitehall, a seminar at the European Parliament's UK Office, Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AA on 19 February. £60. Contact the Directory of Social Change, tel: 071-431 1817.

Augmentative Communication/Communication Aids and Disability, three one day courses at Charing Cross Hospital in London. 18, 19 and 20 February. £40. Further details from Mark Williams, tel: 081-846 1057.

The Health of the Nation, a lunchtime seminar at the King's Fund Centre for Health Services Development, Camden, London NW1 7NF on 28 February. £12. Contact Lisa Showman, tel: 071-267 6111 ext 219.

Open Morning at the Disabled Living Centre, 76 Clarendon Park Road, Leicester on 29 February. Free. More details from Christine Gale, tel: (0533) 700747.

Asian Children Play, a one day conference in Birmingham on how to develop appropriate play provision for Asian communities. 3 March. £20-£30. Details from Play-train on 021-442 4641.

Introduction to Rehabilitation Work with Visually Impaired People, a one day course at the RNIB-NMC in Birmingham. 4 March. £55. Further information and booking forms from the principal, tel: 021-643 9912.

EC Programmes for People with Disabilities, a training seminar in Werkenrode, Netherlands on 6 March. £150. More information from Mobility International, 228 Borough High Street, London SE1 1JX, tel: 071-403 5688.

The Arts and Abilities Conference at the Beaford Centre, Winkleigh, Devon on 13 March. £15. Further information from Peter Harris, tel: (08053) 201.

Housing - A Question of Influence? A conference at RIBA, Portland Place, London, 13 March. Further details from Rachel Scott, Conference Officer, RADAR, 25 Mortimer Street, London WIN 8AB, tel: 071-637 5400.

Interdisciplinary Training Day on Prader-Willi Syndrome at Chadsmoor Methodist Church, Cannock, Staffs on 28 March. Free. Details from Jackie Waters, Information Officer, PWSA (UK), 5 Wollaton Road, Chaddesden, Derby DE2 4HX, tel: (0332) 668790.

INFO

Alcohol Concern has an advice leaflet on drinking for elderly people who have a lower tolerance of alcohol than the rest of the population. Alcohol Concern, 305 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8QF.

Minicom users can call BT's directory enquiries service on 0800 838363. Before dialling set the minicom to CCITT. London Electricity now have two minicom numbers: 071-831 3945 for normal office hours and 071-738 5733 for emergency calls after office hours. British Equity has installed a machine in its London headquarters, tel: 071-436 6007 (see picture left).

The Centre for Accessible Environments has designed a **wheelchair template** to help designers assess the accessibility of building plans. £7.50 (inc p&p) from the Centre for Accessible Environments, 35 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BJ. Cheques should be

made payable to the Centre on Environment for the Handicapped.

Waddingtons, the makers of **Monopoly**, have launched braille and large versions of the



game. £14.95 from RNIB Customer Services, PO Box 173, Peterborough PE2 6WS, tel: (0345) 023153. Quote ref GB40.

The Guild of Romance Writers is launching an award for writers of romantic fiction who have never before had a work of romantic fiction published. First prize £200. Send an SAE for an entry form to

Crystal Heart Award, The Guild of Romance Writers, 3 Regal Lane, Soham, Ely, Cambridgeshire CB7 5BA.

Contact A Family has launched a **directory of support networks** for families with rare syndromes. £43 (inc p&p) form CAF, 16 Strutton Ground, London SW1P 2HP, tel: 071-222 2695.

Link is a new disability group set up by OutRage! an organisation of lesbians and disabled men. Next meeting 3 February in London. Contact Tim Hart c/o OutRage! Office, London Lesbian and Gay Centre, 67-69 Cowcross Street EC1 6BP.

MOVES

Andy Berry and **David Hendon** have been elected vice chairmen of The Spastics Society. **Jim Doran** is now Press and Public Relations Officer at the RNID. **Kerena Marchant** is the editor of the Disabled Persons Unit and **Mike Devenney** is now a training manager at the BBC. **Bob Price** has been elected President of the British Sports Association for the Disabled.



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Monday 1st June 1992, Kensington & Chelsea Town Hall, London W6

This Conference is the culmination of a series of seminars which have been funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. In this Conference issues derived from the previous seminars will be raised and explored. These will examine key issues such as: discrimination, empowerment, participation and an outlining of potential future developments.

Key speakers include, Frances Hasler, Jenny Morris, Sally Baldwin, Vic Finkelstein and Mike Oliver. These sessions will be chaired by Sir William Utting. Workshops will also be available in both the morning and afternoon sessions. These will examine relevant projects and topics. For example:

- Involving disabled people in research
- Research and its relationship to disability organisations
- Using research to bring about change
- Research, race and disability
- Measuring Disability

A number of bursaries will be available, on a first come first served basis, to assist attendance by disabled people.

Further information and application forms can be obtained from

Val Stokes, Division of Education, University of Sheffield, Po Box 595, Sheffield, S10 2UJ. Telephone: (0742) 768555, ext 4597

If wishes were fishes

*If you can keep your head, when all about you
Are patting it as if you were aged two,*

*If you can trust your limbs when others doubt you;
Accept help with good grace, not as your due.*

*If you can be content with your low earnings
While others around you have so much more to spend.*

*If you can learn to conquer normal yearnings,
To "sublimate" and not go round the bend.*

*If you can walk with crowds and keep your balance
Or talk with kings, and not let speech be slurred.*

*If, when they praise some very minor talents,
You can let your real achievements go unheard.*

*If you can keep your dignity on falling;
Get up to face the stars, and with a smile.*

*If you can bear the welfare workers calling
To tabulate you neatly in a file.*

*If you can face your limitations squarely
Yet keep on striving to the bitter end,*

*You will be more than just disabled,
For, clearly, you'll be a miracle my friend!*
Anonymous, with apologies to Rudyard Kipling

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a £10 prize

Create-a-caption

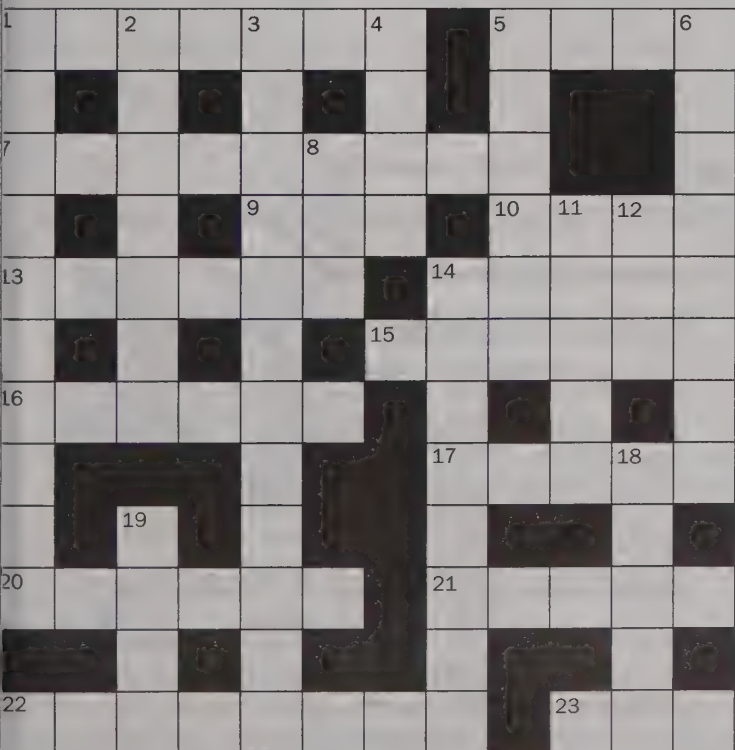
Smuffy the
miniature Schnauzer
is calling his furry
friends to tell them
all about Friskies
Petcare Helpline*,
which owners can
call for advice on
pet problems.
But what else could
the little terror be
barking about?
Ruff ideas for
answers please by
13 February,
address page 3.

* For your nearest Friskies
volunteer, tel: 071-352 7220.



DN's crossword

Answers page 23 COMPILED BY REBECCA REYNOLDS



- ACROSS

 - Could be machine or powder (7)
 - Hit violently (4)
 - Secret marriage (9)
 - West, 30's film star (3)
 - Type of wood (4)
 - Philip — 20th Century poet (6)
 - War and —, novel by Tolstoy (5)
 - Put in place (6)
 - Pursued (6)
 - Sexy poster (3, 2)
 - Dried fruit (sounds like it's going up) (6)
 - Causes scratching (5)
 - Feel rail (anag)
 - Large pot (3)
- DOWN

 - Transport used by some people with disabilities (10)
 - Scottish pouch (7)
 - Shop receipt showing each purchase (8,4)
 - Great joy (4)
 - Same as 5 across (6)
 - Had too much to drink (6,2)
 - The opposite of woman (3)
 - Consumed (5)
 - The highest or lowest card (3)
 - Dolphin-like animal (8)
 - Cinema attendant, for example (5)
 - Italian currency (4)

... NEWS QUIZ ... NEWS QUIZ ... NEWS QUIZ

Answers page 23

- What did chain store WH Smith decide to stop selling?
- Who knocked Arsenal out of the FA Cup?
- Which type of cancer did doctors develop a new treatment for?
- Why were there fears about British research into
- Alzheimer's Disease?
- Who collapsed with what in Tokyo?
- Why did prices triple in Russia?
- Which parliament had its first meeting in Britain?
- Which record was number one in the pop charts over
- Christmas?
- According to a British Medical Association survey, how many senior doctors in medical school regretted going into medicine?
- Which actress married Simple Minds singer Jim Kerr?

January winner

Thanks again for all your entries. The £10 prize for January goes to Mrs R Davies of Cardiff. The Victorian flower seller is commenting on the basket of flowers to Mrs Major:



"These are like your husband - they'll be out in May!"
If you've never written a caption, have a go now!

SUNGIFT PLC ONLY THE BEST
IS GOOD ENOUGH
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DO YOU HAVE WALKING PROBLEMS?
WHY BE A PRISONER IN YOUR OWN HOME?
JUST IMAGINE HAVING THE FREEDOM TO COME AND GO AS "YOU" PLEASE.
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"without the problem of tipping."
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IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION ON THE FULL
RANGE OF PRODUCTS, JUST FILL IN THE COUPON BELOW.



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ADDRESS
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TEL

"SEND TO"
BODY THERAPY,
HAWTHORN HOUSE,
3 HAWTHORN CLOSE,
ALLER PARK,
NEWTON ABBOT,
TQ12 4TG.

HOLIDAYS

BRITTANY COTTAGE to let. Fully adapted for wheelchair use. Good access to beaches. Sleeps up to 6. Details C Hodgson. Tel: (0924) 454300.

Try a **WINGED FELLOWSHIP** Holiday in Britain or Overseas. Great fun and full care provided. Write for free colour brochure. Winged Fellowship, Angel House, 20/32 Pentonville Road, London N1 9XD, tel: 071-833 2594.

HIGHLAND HOLIDAYS
RED CROSS HOUSE, INVERNESS, OFFERS RESPITE/HOLIDAY BREAKS FOR ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES. COMFORTABLE SINGLE BEDROOMS. FRIENDLY STAFF PROVIDING 24 HOUR CARE. ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT TO EXPLORE TOURIST TRAILS AND ENJOY MANY LEISURE AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES. FOR BROCHURE AND FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT, THE PRINCIPAL, RED CROSS HOUSE, MACKINTOSH ROAD, RAIGMORE, INVERNESS IV2 3TX. TELEPHONE (0463) 234939.

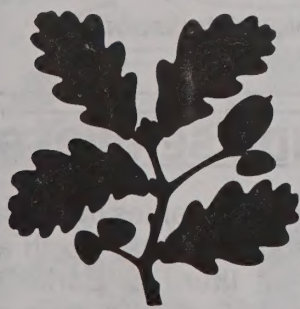
Costa Blanca - Spain
Wheelchair accessible twin bedded accommodation. Swimming pool, adapted minibus, plus various trips and outings included. For full details send for a free colour brochure to: Daystar Holidays Ltd, 26 Scotts Way, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 5RG or telephone (0892) 525133.

SUNNY TENERIFE
Fully Accessible Mar y Sol
"Brilliant" says BBC TV
Holiday Apartments
Brochure: Lynne James Ltd, 7 Overpool Road, Ellesmere Port L66 1JW. (Tel: 051-339 5316)

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE
HOLIDAY COTTAGE IN RURAL FRANCE
Charming cottage in Dordogne region available for rent. Reasonable rates. If you are looking for peace and quiet, warm weather, good food and wine, this is the place for you.
For more information ring 081-459 1324 evenings.

LUXURY HOLIDAY BUNGALOWS.
Two superb quality selfcatering bungalows with 3 bedrooms sleeping up to 6 people. Stunning country views all round and only minutes from beautiful beaches. Fully equipped with microwave, washing machine, tumble dryer, c. tv, video rec., stereo radio cassette and much more. The bungalows are purpose built to accommodate wheelchairs (we have the Tourism for All award), and we offer showerchairs, monkey poles and bed blocks free of charge. For brochures: Hen Ysgol Holiday Homes, Rhoscolyn, Isle of Anglesey, LL65 2RQ. Tel: 0407 741593.

HOLIDAYS AFLOAT. Sailing cruises for disabled and/or able bodied people. With only four guests to care for the skipper and crew can provide that most essential personal touch. Sit back and enjoy or become totally involved, the choice is yours. Most competitively priced. Details: Tom or Anne King 0305 821961. Or write to 55 Shepherds Croft, Portland, Dorset DT5 1DJ.



THE NATIONAL TRUST WELCOMES DISABLED VISITORS

1992 is National Trust Landscape Year. Many of the Trust's landscape parks and countryside sites have excellent access for wheelchair users, and at some, accessibility is further improved by the provision of volunteer-driven buggies, battery-powered self-drive cars, or three-wheeler scooters. These include landscapes such as Ashridge in Hertfordshire and Fountains Abbey in North Yorkshire.

There is no charge for the use of these vehicles, which give independence and enjoyment to many people who can then tour a Trust property beside their companions!

There is a list of properties offering these vehicles and further details are given in a free annual 42 page booklet, published in March, of information for visitors with disabilities, sponsored by Fisons plc. Please send a stamped self-addressed adhesive label (minimum postage) to:

Valerie Wenham,
Dept DN, The National Trust,
36 Queen Anne's Gate,
London SW1H 9AS.

CHRISTCHURCH, BOURNEMOUTH. Holidays for persons requiring transport and accommodation. Specialising in holidays for the elderly and special needs. Inclusive of a **door to door** private transport service and daily tours in Dorset/Hampshire. Help always available. Write for details from Custom Leisure. Tel/fax (0202) 481003. 27 The Meridians. Stour Rd. Christchurch, Dorset. BH23 1RA.

GLEBE FARM HOLIDAYS SELF CATERING COTTAGES FOR THE DISABLED

Glebe Farm, Charles Brayford
Nr. Barnstaple, North Devon EX32 7PT
Telephone: 0598 710241
Open all year. Wheelchair accessible.
Equipment available.
Tourist Board 4 keys and commended.
Please contact: Valerie Boddington

FIND-A-FRIEND

For Find A Friend ads please send a cheque or postal order for £3 payable to *Disability Now* with your ad. This is to help cover our costs.

58 YEAR OLD WOMAN (right amputee) would like to find a male friend, late 50s or early 60s, to write to. Box no 398.

MALE, 45, slightly disabled with CP seeks able-bodied female (30-45) with a good sense of humour for a loving relationship. My hobbies are meeting people, eating out, discos, travel and socialising. I have my own place and car. If you live in the South please reply. Box No. 399.

WIDOWER, 49, 6ft 2in, dark hair, green eyes. I have MS but am still mobile (just). I would like a caring lady for a loving relationship and to share my life. I'm looking for a non-smoker with a sense of humour from the Kent area. Box No. 400.

There is a short waiting list for Find-A-Friend ads. Do no worry if your advert is not in immediately, it will probably appear next month.

CHRISTIAN MALE, early 30s, well educated graduate with cp. In open employment, mobile, car owner. Likes eating out, travel, music and reading. Seeks christian female companion with a happy disposition and sense of humour for a meaningful relationship. Non-smoker, disabled/non disabled, 25-40. Box No. 401.

LADY, 36, single, tall, slim, professional occupation, able-bodied with many disabled friends, seeks male of similar background, able bodied or disabled, for friendship, evenings out and possible romance. North Staffs/South Cheshire area preferred. Box No. 402.

FEMALE, 29, disabled seeks single able-bodied/disabled male or female for friendship. Interests include socialising, reading, dining out, music, videos, tv etc. I'm described as lively and cheerful so go on, drop us a line (ages 25-35 only). Box No. 403.

DISABLED MAN, 40s, a wheelchair user living in S.W. Durham is seeking a female, able-bodied holiday companion, preferably aged 28/36. I would like an extrovert with a sense of humour, their own transport and who is a non-smoker. My interests include all kinds of music, classic cars, history, travel, photography and eating out. Box No. 404.

To reply to a Find-A-Friend advertisement indicate the Box Number and mark the envelope Private and Confidential. If you do not it will be opened. Send to Disability Now, address on page 3.



For people with disabilities and caring, understanding able bodied persons Ladies should not be shy of applying!

All enquiries to: HANDIDATE
The Wellington Centre
52 Chevallier Street
Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 2PB
Telephone: (0473) 226950

40th Anniversary 1992

THE SPASTICS SOCIETY FOR PEOPLE WITH CEREBRAL PALSY

Meldreth Manor School

Deputy Headteacher

Group 3 (s) - Required for April 1992

Meldreth Manor is a residential school for pupils with physical disabilities and severe or profound multiple learning difficulties. The school provides for up to 80 pupils aged 8 -19 years.

Proven professional ability with sound leadership and management skills is necessary. A commitment to interdisciplinary working is essential.

The Deputy Head will have responsibility for co-ordinating curriculum development and in-service training throughout the school.

The post can be residential or non-residential. On-call duties are a requirement.

Senior Teacher - (Upper School 14-19)

(Allowance 'D') - Required for April 1992

The Senior Teacher has responsibility for developing, monitoring and reviewing the curriculum framework for the Upper school, including the record of achievements.

A commitment to interdisciplinary working is essential.

On-call duties are a requirement.

Application form and further details from Caroline Coles, Head Teacher, Meldreth Manor School, Meldreth, Royston, Herts SG8 6LG or telephone (0763) 260771.

Closing date 7th February 1992.

We very much welcome applications from people with disabilities.

WORKING TOWARDS EQUALITY

Project Assistant

(Disability Equality)

£17,607 - £18,591 inclusive

The post is based in a busy, integrated Equal Opportunities Unit with the specific responsibility of developing disability equality initiatives.

You will lead on:

- disability equality projects in the community with voluntary organisations
- developing links with community groups

You will support the work of the Principal Disability Adviser by:

- undertaking research and consultation projects
- prepare background papers, reports and information on disability issues
- assist council departments in Service Monitoring and other disability equality projects

Only people with disabilities will be considered for this post.

Applicants must be aware of and have a genuine commitment to equal opportunities issues as they affect other disadvantaged groups.

For details tel 081-862 5225 (24 hour answer service) quoting Ref: DAS/02/01. Director of Administration & Support Services, Civic Centre, Lampton Road, Hounslow, Middlesex TW3 4DN. Closing date 1 February 1992.

Job Sharers welcome

We operate a 'No Smoking' policy.

Hounslow
An Equal Opportunity Employer

40th Anniversary 1992

THE SPASTICS SOCIETY FOR PEOPLE WITH CEREBRAL PALSY

Chief Executive

Substantial Remuneration Package - Central London

The Spastics Society aims to provide a wide range of services of the highest quality to people with cerebral palsy, their families and carers, and to campaign and change attitudes to disability.

The Executive Council (Trustee Body) includes parents and people with disabilities. There is a membership of 207 affiliated but autonomous local groups.

The Society is going through a period of challenging and exciting change; many of its service users are moving from large residential units into homes of their own in the community and the range and quality of support provided to children and their families is increasing. Significant investments have been made in new forms of fundraising and campaigning.

The Executive Council now wishes to appoint a Chief Executive. The postholder's main roles will be:

To ensure that the Society's services are delivered effectively and in accordance with Council policies; to be a powerful advocate for service users with Government and the general public; to foster and encourage the development of positive relationships between the Executive Council, the Team of Directors and staff and between the Society and its local groups; and to provide sensitive and competent management of the Society's staff and other assets.

The successful candidate will have proven ability in management of change and in people management. They will also have a strong commitment to the effective provision of services of quality to people with disabilities, their families and carers and to the promotion of their right to participate fully in society.

If you wish to take up this challenge, please write for details (also available in large print, in braille or on audio tape) to the Chairman of the Society at 12 Park Crescent, London, W1N 4EQ or ring Mrs R de Silva, Executive Secretary to the Chairman on 071 636 5020 ext 217.

The Society particularly welcomes applications from people with disabilities. The appropriate facilities will be made available.

The closing date for applications is Monday 14th February 1992.

WORKING TOWARDS EQUALITY

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

Vacancies for Lectureships exist in the following areas:-

CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY - Suitable for a registered Medical Practitioner, interested in teaching and research duties in the field of Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics. Ref M/133.

REPRODUCTIVE SCIENCES - Requiring extensive research experience in Molecular Biology. Ref M/134.

ACCOUNTING & MANAGEMENT SCIENCE - To research and teach operational research related subjects. Ref D/131.

HELICOPTER ENGINEERING - To provide teaching support for Aeronautics & Astronautics degree courses. Ref R/117.

Applications (seven copies of full Curriculum Vitae and all correspondence relating to your application) including the names and addresses of three referees should be sent to the Personnel Department, University of Southampton, Highfield, Southampton, SO9 5NH, from whom further particulars may be obtained, by 21 February 1992, quoting the appropriate reference number(s).

Working for Equal Opportunities



**University
of Southampton**



WOKING SHOPMOBILITY ASSISTANT MANAGER(S)

One full-time Assistant Manager - £9,000 p.a.

One part-time Assistant Manager
(20 hours p.w.) £9,000 p.a. pro rata

WHAT IS 'SHOPMOBILITY' ?

It is a registered charity which provides wheelchairs and powered scooters to help people who have limited mobility, to shop and use the facilities within Woking Town Centre.

Your office will be located in a purpose built unit within Woking Town Centre's new shopping development.

DO YOU HAVE:

- a caring attitude and relate well to people
- an ability to assist in the administration and promotion of the service
- an ability to work with volunteers
- an ability to carry out minor maintenance to wheelchairs

WE NEED

- one full-time and one part-time Assistant Manager(s) for the new Shopmobility Centre due to open in April 1992
- you to take up your post at the end of March 1992
- you to work flexible hours including weekends.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

CLOSING DATE: 14 February 1992

PROPOSED INTERVIEW DATE: 28 February 1992

**FOR JOB DESCRIPTION AND APPLICATION FORM CONTACT -
The Personnel Section, Woking Borough Council, Civic Offices, Woking,
Surrey. Tel: Woking (0483) 755855 x 3023.**



EDUCATIONAL SERVICE FOR THE
VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

Educational Mobility Officers

(Two Posts)

£11961 - £13134

+ Essential User Car Allowance

We seek two Mobility Officers to work with visually handicapped children and young people in a wide range of educational establishments across the County of Humberside.

Candidates holding an appropriate qualification from one of the nationally recognised training centres will be preferred, although other applicants with appropriate experience may be considered.

A disturbance and relocation package is offered as part of this appointment.

Application forms and further details are available from:

The Head of Service, Educational Service for the Visually Handicapped, County Support Centre, Wold Road, Hull, HU5 5QG, tel (0482) 507906. Post No: 218003. Closing Date: 14 February 1992.

This Authority positively welcomes applicants from all sections of the community, and particularly from people with disabilities and people from Black and Asian Communities who are currently under-represented in the workforce. Applications to jobshare will be considered sympathetically.

**HUMBERSIDE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

Working towards equal opportunities



Love quiz answers

from page 13

Mostly a's.

Faint heart never won fair lady or handsome hunk. Before you can fall in love with someone you need to love yourself first. After all, if you don't think you're the tops, why should anyone else? Everyone has something to offer so start discovering what makes you special. Start by making a list of the five best things about yourself and how you can use them to attract others. Good luck!

Mostly b's.

When it comes to love, you're like the proverbial bull in the china shop - slow down! There is a big difference between being assertive and being aggressive. The former earns respect, but the latter can be a turn off in the wrong place. Romance can take time to blossom so take it easy. Let your partner discover your hidden delights slowly - it's more fun that way!

Mostly c's.

Oh la la! When it comes to love you are a true romantic - kind, considerate, loving and gentle. If you haven't already found Mr or Miss Right, what are you waiting for? But be careful you don't go overboard with everyone you meet - wait for the right person to come along and make sure they're worth it.

Renew your subscription in seconds!

You can now renew your *Disability Now* subscription by Access or Visa over the phone. Call Gayle Mooney or Karen King on 071-383 4575.

To pay by cheque, just fill in the coupon on the back page.

DIAL HOUSE, CHESTER INFORMATION OFFICER

Salary £10,530

DIAL House is looking for someone to provide a comprehensive information and advice service to people with disabilities and develop a specialist knowledge of welfare rights and opportunities available to young people. Good communication skills and knowledge of the needs and aspirations of people with disabilities are essential.

For further details and application form: Telephone (0244) 345655

Closing date: 14th February 1992

Chester & District Committee for Disabled People are striving to be an Equal Opportunities employer. This post is suitable for job share.

COURSES

Aspects of Head Injury - Study Day

Monday 9th March 1992, 9.45am - 4.15pm

There will be a study day at the English Riviera Centre, Torquay at which the speakers will highlight the complex difficulties which arise from head injuries.

The cost of the day will be £35 to include morning coffee, lunch and afternoon tea.

Further information and application forms may be obtained by contacting:-
The Secretary, Rose Hill Rehabilitation Unit,
Lower Warberry Road, Torquay, Devon TQ1 1QY.

Closing date 17th February 1992.

40th Anniversary 1992

THE SPASTICS SOCIETY

FOR PEOPLE WITH CEREBRAL PALSY

Administrative Assistant - Library and Information Unit

Six Month Temporary Post to Cover Maternity Leave
(Possibility of Becoming Permanent)

Grade 3 - £9,516 + Inner London Weighting £1,884.

We are looking for someone to join our small, friendly team to provide administrative/secretarial support to the unit in the provision of a library & information service to people with cerebral palsy, their families and carers.

The post holder will need to have a good telephone manner, word-processing skills, be able to cope with changing priorities and work to deadlines. Previous experience of working with the public would be an asset.

Please send a letter of application and CV (including daytime telephone number) to Mona Joshi, Information Officer, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ.

Interviews to be held on Tuesday 18th February 1991.

We welcome applications from people with disabilities.

WORKING TOWARDS EQUALITY

LEEDS FORUM OF DISABLED PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT WORKER (HALF-TIME)

Leeds Forum of Disabled People is the umbrella organisation of people with disability and their organisations. A part time development worker is required to service and develop this expanding organisation.

She/he will work in a team promoting care in the community in the voluntary sector. 17.5 hours per week. 3 years initial funding.

Salary local government SO1. £15,066 pro rata.

Further details and application form (ref DN/LFDP) from Voluntary Action Leeds, 229 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds LS2 9LF. Phone 0532 448921 (minicom).

Closing date 21st February 1992.

Applications from people with disability
are especially welcome.

LONDON DIAL A RIDE SERVICES

The six Regional Dial a Ride Companies (Central based at Paddington or Westbourne Park, North at New Southgate, North-East at Ilford or Barking, South at Wimbledon Park, South-East at Sidcup or Peckham and West at Perivale) will each shortly be seeking to fill the following new posts:-

Operations Manager; Finance and Administration Officer; Personnel Officer; and Secretary to the Regional Manager.

Job Descriptions, Person Specifications and Salaries have not yet been finalised, but it is expected that the posts will be advertised in early February with a closing date for applications of the end of February. Unfortunately, because of publication dates it will not be possible to include the advert in *Disability Now*.

For full details and an application form when available, phone Mandy Scales on 071 222 5600 ext 23023 or write to the Unit for Disabled Passengers, London Transport, 55 Broadway, London SW1H 0BD.

London Transport is administering the initial stages of recruitment on behalf of the six companies which are Equal Opportunities Employers.

**Community Services Unit
MOBILITY SERVICES
DEVELOPMENT MANAGER**

Salary Scale £17,000 - £18,475

We wish to develop existing wheelchair prosthetic and home loans services. Applications are invited from suitably qualified Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists who would also wish to develop their own managerial and clinical skills within the mobility field.

A full-time, 3 year fixed term contract would start in April 1992. Interviews will take place week commencing 24th February 1992.

A job description of the post and local information pack is available from: Mr R.W. Brown, AGM, Community Services Unit, St Mary's Hospital, Burghill, Hereford HR4 7RF. Telephone 0432 760324.

Closing date: 19th February 1992

**HEREFORDSHIRE
HEALTH AUTHORITY**

40th Anniversary 1992

THE SPASTICS SOCIETY
FOR PEOPLE WITH CEREBRAL PALSY

Wales/West Regions

Personnel Officer (Full Time)

or 2 Personnel Officers (Part Time)

Scale 8: £17,040 - £18,375 (pro rata)

A vacancy has arisen for an enthusiastic, qualified and experienced Personnel Officer to join committed staff teams in the Society's Wales and West Regions.

The person appointed (if employed on a full time basis) will be responsible for the provision of a full range of personnel services to staff within these Regions consistent with the Society's aims, objectives and policies. He/she will also be required to support local voluntary groups affiliated to the Society.

A professional qualification (i.e. I.P.M., I.T.D) plus a minimum of 2 years relevant experience is essential.

Office location can be either Bristol or Cardiff. Work within Wales will be mainly concentrated in the Cardiff/Swansea areas.

A lease car may be available.

A job description, application form and further details may be obtained by writing to: Julie Hathaway, Regional Office Administrator, The Spastics Society, 160 Pennywell Road, Easton, Bristol BS5 0TX. (Please indicate which post you are interested in.)

Closing date for applications 10th February 1992.

Applications from people with disabilities will be very welcome.

WORKING TOWARDS EQUALITY

Deadlines for March issue: booking by 14 February, camera ready artwork/copy by 18 February.

**NEWS QUIZ
ANSWERS**

1. LP records 2. Wrexham 3. Breast cancer 4. Some of the doctors planned to move to America 5. President George Bush, with 24-hour gastric flu 6. President Boris Yeltsin removed price controls 7. The Muslim Parliament 8. Bohemian Rhapsody by Queen 9. One fifth 10. Singer Patsy Kensit

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1. Washing 5. Beat 7. Elopement 9. Mae 10. Teak 13. Larkin 14. Peace 15. Sorted 16. Hunted 17. Pin-up 20. Raisin 21. Itchy 22. Real life 23. Urn

DOWN: 1. Wheelchair 2. Sporan 3. Itemized bill 4. Glee 5. Batter 6. Tanked up 8. Man 11. Eaten 12. Ace 14. Porpoise 18. Usher 19. Lira

Did you know that *Disability Now* is a non-profit making newspaper and welcomes donations. If you can help write to *DN*, address on page 3.

TO ADVERTISE YOUR VACANCIES/COURSES

Please contact the Advertisement Manager, Richard Gresham, Kingslea Press Limited, 12 Dock Offices, Surrey Quays Road, London SE16 2XU. Telephone 071- 252 1362. Fax: 071- 237 8019.

**EAST BRISTOL YOUTH HOUSING ASSOCIATION
CO-ORDINATOR**

**35 HOURS PER WEEK
£17,898 - £19,461 P.A.
30 DAYS HOLIDAY P.A.**

EBYHA is a locally based, forward-looking organisation, housing over 90 young single people, mainly in shared housing.

We are looking for a new Co-ordinator to manage the Association's twelve staff, service the Committee, fundraise, liaise with other organisations and run the project on a day-to-day basis.

You will need to have at least two years in housing and have managed staff for at least one year.

For our job information pack, please contact EBYHA, 42 Chelsea Road, Easton, Bristol BS5 6AF. Tel: 0272-551201.

Closing date 7th February

Interviews 14th February

EBYHA is committed to Equal Opportunities and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

British Council of Organisations of Disabled People

Independent Living Seminar Organiser

BCODP is seeking two disabled people with a detailed knowledge of Independent Living issues (particular reference to Personal Assistance) to arrange two seminars in the UK during the summer/autumn of 1992.

One person will arrange a northern seminar to be held in July '92 and will commence this project in April. The second person will arrange a southern seminar in September and will commence in June. Successful candidates will also write a report on the outcomes of each seminar.

These positions are offered on a short term consultancy of 5 months each with remuneration fixed at £6,700 per person plus agreed expenses. Candidates will be expected to tender for the work.

For an information pack (state braille or tape if required) write to BCODP, De Bradelei House, Chapel Street, Belper, Derbyshire DE5 1AR.

Closing date is 28th February 1992

BCODP is an equal opportunities employer.


**AN
ENCOURAGING
SIGN**

More and more people are finding out about the enormous range of career options we can offer in the Civil Staff of the Metropolitan Police.

Join us, and you too could build a fascinating career in one of a whole variety of fields - from administration to forensic science, secretarial to engineering and catering to property services. All of which are vital to the efficient and effective running of London's police operations.

If you're interested in finding out more about the opportunities we may have available, we'd very much like to hear from you.

Please write enclosing a C.V. to: Leo Daly, Metropolitan Police Service, E9(2) Grade Management Branch, Room 213, 105 Regency Street, London SW1P 4AN.

We are an Equal Opportunities Employer and welcome applications from suitably qualified individuals regardless of race, religion, sex or disability. 



Research 'ignored'

Disability research is being ignored and underfunded, say two major charities.

The Hearing Research Trust says out of nearly £2,000m spent annually in the UK on medical research, only £5m is spent on preventing or alleviating deafness. This works out at 72p for each of the 7m Britons affected by hearing loss.

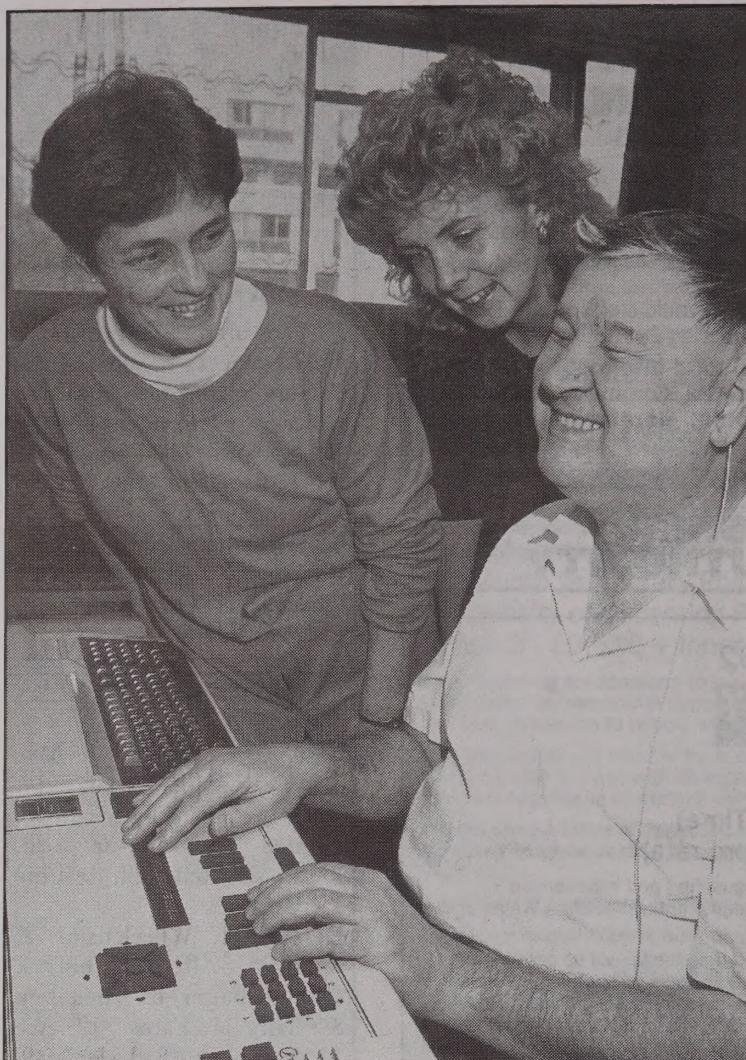
Describing deafness as "the cinderella of medical research", Hearing Trust director Vivienne Michael said: "Hearing loss is one of the most common of all disabilities but levels of both government and charitable funding are failing to reflect this."

Annual expenditure on epilepsy research works out at 90p for each of the 350,000 people with the condition, says a new survey by the National

Society for Epilepsy (NSE), a medical, research and care charity. This contrasts with £250 per person for people who have muscular dystrophy.

NSE medical director Dr Simon Shorvon surveyed other charities research funding, analysed grants from the Medical Research Council (the main government agency promoting medical research), major research charities, epilepsy charities and industrial research support.

"The shortage of research funds is a substantial headache for all clinical academic researchers in the UK. In recent years, government funding has been heavily cut and the allocation of direct government funds appears to be dictated by short term or political expedience," he said.



Alan Knights of Colindale with Vicky Waite (left) a Barnet Council social work assistant and Janice Leonard. Both women are listed in a new Directory of Interpreters, compiled by the Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People (CACDP) and sponsored by Marks and Spencer. The directory will list contact points for 100-150 deaf, deaf/blind and lip-speaking interpreters, and advice for people who haven't used interpreters before, such as what to pay. Available in April from CACDP at an estimated cost of around £12. Tel: 091-374 3607.

JOHN RIFKIN

Cold cash to be paid in advance

The Government has for the first time made cold weather payments in advance of an icy spell.

Under the "Forward Trigger" system introduced in June last year, £6-a-week payments were made automatically in January to 137,000 people living in parts of the Scottish borders, Yorkshire, Humberside, Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire and the Midlands after the meteorological office forecast a seven day freeze.

Cold weather payments are given to households on income support with a child under five, a person over 60 or a person with a disability when temperatures fall below zero.

Although the payments are made automatically, Camden Council's welfare rights unit fear some people may miss out on the payments because their files are not on the Government's computer.

A council spokesman said: "If you are entitled to these payments but have not received them yet, contact your local social security office immediately to make sure you are on their list."

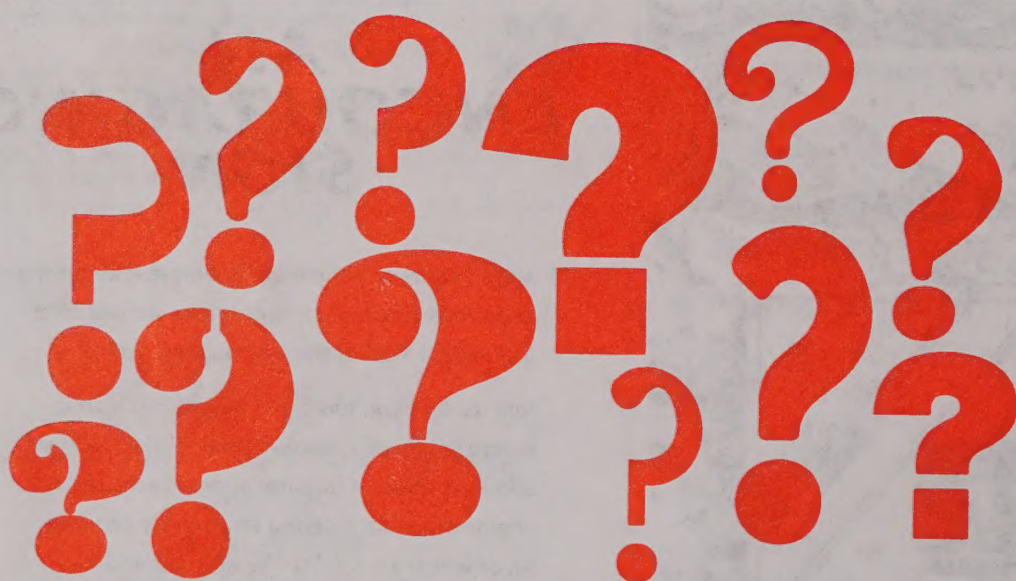
Your views please

Elderly and disabled people in Gateshead are being urged to give their views on the community care plans of local authorities.

The plans, which were put together by Gateshead Council, Gateshead Health Authority and Gateshead Family Health Services, were unveiled in Jan-

uary. Copies will be available throughout the borough, and there will be public meetings as well.

Copies of the plans (also in braille or on tape) from Dr David Fruin, 091-477 1011, ext 2395. Deadline for comments is 28 February.



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